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GLIMPSES

"

OF THE

LIFE OF REV. A. E. PHELPS

AND

HIS CO-LABORERS;

OR,

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE METHODIST ITINERANCY.

BY

REV. J. J. FLEHARTY, A. M.,

III

OF THE CENTRAL ILLINOIS CONFERENCE, AND AUTHOR OF "SOCIAL IMPURITY."

With An Introduction,

By REV. ARTHUR EDWARDS, D. D.,

EDITOR OF THE "NORTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE."



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1878.

Copyright
By J. W. PHELPS.
1878.

TO THE
Veteran Members of the Old Illinois Conference

WHO STILL LINGER ON THE EARTHLY SHORE;

TO
THE FRIENDS WHO SAT UNDER THE MINISTRATIONS
OF REV. A. E. PHELPS;

TO
HIS INTIMATE FRIEND AND CO-LABORER,
BISHOP E. R. AMES;

AND TO THE
SURVIVING MEMBERS OF HIS DEVOTED FAMILY,

This Volume

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

331662

PREFACE.

THE numerous admirers of the lamented A. E. PHELPS will be disappointed in not finding those great sermons that so mightily swayed the multitude, not a trace of which is now extant. Those inserted were not designed for the press, and were delivered during his early ministry. No suitable portrait could be obtained for insertion. The author has done what he could to rescue from obscurity the name of a faithful and powerful Methodist itinerant minister. The book is published at the expense of his only surviving son, J. W. PHELPS, of Plainfield, Illinois. The reader will be delighted with its typography and external finish. The author is under many obligations to friends in the ministry and laity for valuable suggestions. It has been to him a work and labor of love.

It is now sent forth as a humble tribute to the memory of one who was *good and great*. *May it be made a blessing to many.*

J. J. F.

WYOMING, Ill., Sept. 2, 1878.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE expert biographer is a tender savior who raises the departed to life again. The good man is immortal in many senses. God remembers him; the "Life" embalms him; the Church will not let him die. No person can read the following pages without a deep sense that he has been in the presence of a noble, earnest, devout, successful, holy servant of God. Asahel E. Phelps has left a record to be emulated by every minister of Jesus Christ. Had any one Church ten thousand such men the entire world would be evangelized in two decades. The mystery in the providential departure of such evangelists is a mystery greater than death itself. Surely God bereaves us when he promotes our workers; but the fact may prove his infinite love both for those who go and for us who linger behind. In the act he rewards the promoted, and adds new attractions to heaven, that we may not lack motive to be faithful unto the end.

This life of an honored minister is one more testimony to the value of early religious training. Mr.

Phelps had devout Methodist parents. Happy the child that is consecrated to God from infancy; and most highly endowed is that minister of the Word who is devoted to the Lord's exclusive work from the hour of his birth. Under cold, formal ecclesiasticism, there might, in such case, be danger; but when, under evangelical auspices, clear conversion and spiritual convictions sanction the parental dedication, the Church is sure of vital re-enforcement.

The steady persistence with which Mr. Phelps conquered the disabilities in his early life is perfectly admirable. His health was frail, his advisers few, his outfit scant, and his purse almost painfully light. But the Arminian foreordination that he should rise laughed at apparent impossibilities. The student who can rise at four in the morning, and literally fight his way step by step with book in hand, is conqueror from the beginning, and is more than the peer of the average graduate. Such men are equaled only by those of their own kind who find their way to and through the training college.

The history of early Western Methodist campaigns reads like an epic and a psalm. The central social figures forty years ago were not the legislators, the judges, nor the merchant-princes of the North-west. It would seem that all things crystallized about the work, not the person, of the early Methodist preacher. A false theology works itself

out in a hollow social system; hence the theological debates of those days had more than mere polemical significance. Mr. Phelps's generalship, eloquence, fullness of data, fire, and force as a controversial debater are as admirable as they are well nigh inimitable. The chapters herein given, containing the memoranda on Baptism and Universalism, are plethoric, unique, and invaluable. Few products of his brain could better show his industry and acumen.

The feature of the book is the formal, and the incidental, evidence that Mr. Phelps lived very near to God. His life, labor, aims, aspirations, and communion with the head of the Church were real transactions between heaven and an heir of the kingdom. He realized that he belonged to Christ's rear-guard left on earth to occupy till Jesus should release him. Every day had its assigned duty, and it was fit that the servant should tarry near the throne for frequent, fresh inspiration. Happy the evangel who serves as seeing him who is invisible.

Still one more feature in the good man's life invites our loving attention. The constant student, the devout minister, the thundering polemic, the tireless friend of education, the wise Church legislator had a heart tender as a child, and his home held his heart as firmly as the Ark constrained the loving dove. No distance, no emergency, no combat, no imperious duty could make him forget "wife and children."

From the distant Eastern coast, as from the remote pulpit appointment, the busy man could sing of his home:

(“My heart, untraveled,
Fondly turns to thee.”)

The letters written in the confidence of a husband's and a father's heart are among the most charming glimpses of his manly inner life.

Asahel E. Phelps was a great man, and the promising harvest of his forty-seven years was but an earnest of the more magnificent product possible to him had he been spared to serve during three-score and ten years.

His survivors, his wife, his children, his fellow laborers have a rich legacy in his odorous memory. The lesson of his life is potent to guard, guide, and inspire a legion of ministerial successors.

ARTHUR EDWARDS.

OFFICE NORTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, }
Chicago, September, 1878. }

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

IN THE

METHODIST ITINERANCY.

CHAPTER FIRST.

PARENTAGE—CONVERSION—CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

Birth—His Father—Mother—Marriage—Family Altar—Asahel's First Religious Impressions—Dedicated to God at Birth—His Mother's Death—"Old Tom" his Spiritual Teacher—Twelfth Birthday—Conversion—Apprenticeship—Backsliding—The Fortune-teller—Studies English Grammar with W. L. Deneen—Joins Conference at Madison—Number Admitted—Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada organized—Bishop George's Death—Old Illinois District—Early Settlers—Slavery Sentiment—Shams—Appointed to Kaskaskia Circuit with S. L. Robinson—Size of Circuit—Peter Cartwright—Conference at Edwardsville—J. Dew, and A. E. Phelps at Lebanon—Facilities for Study—Conference at Vincennes—E. R. Ames and W. D. R. Trotter admitted—Meets Miss Charlotte Caterline—Attachment—Lost—"Tom" leads him out of Woods—Conference at Indianapolis—Edwin Ray—James Bankson.

ASAH^{EL} ELI^U PHELPS was born in Sussex County, Delaware, March 21, 1806. His father, Asahel Phelps, was a soldier in the war for American independence. Though but a youth, he responded to the call for volun-

teers, and served throughout that long and bloody struggle for freedom. He was a native of Connecticut, had not received a classical education, but was a fine English scholar. In music, both vocal and instrumental, he greatly excelled. Agnes Houston, mother of A. E. Phelps, was a native of Delaware. She was a young woman of fine personal appearance, and possessed of more than ordinary mental capacity. Their marriage, after a courtship extending, probably, through several years of Revolutionary history and peril, was consummated at the close of the war. To them were born nine children. Asahel Elihu was the seventh. His parents were Christians, members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and deeply interested in the moral welfare of their children. They gave such strict and constant attention to the study of the Bible and the instruction of the members of their household in the duties of a religious life, that their minds were early and permanently impressed with a reverence for the Bible and a firm belief in its inspiration. They were taught and made to feel their need of regeneration by the Holy Spirit. "An altar of prayer had long since been erected in the domestic circle, and the flame of devotion enkindled, which was only extinguished by the

dissolution of the family band." * Mr. Phelps was a music-teacher. He was frequently absent from home, and taught in the principal cities of the Eastern and Middle States with marked success. Mrs. Agnes Phelps was a holy woman, and during the absence of her husband attended faithfully and very devoutly to the religious instruction of her children. To her Asahel Elihu was indebted for his first religious impressions. He was taught to pray morning and evening, as regularly as the day dawned and declined.

At the early age of five he was convicted of sin, and his conscience at times became so thoroughly aroused to the danger of incurring the displeasure of God, and his mind was so deeply agitated with the fear of God's righteous judgments, that he was almost driven to despair. He felt that he deserved to be cast into the lake of fire, and that this would most surely be his portion unless his sins could be washed away. He was at times in danger of complete mental derangement. His mother was his spiritual guide. Thank God for such mothers! She recited to him the precious promises of the Gospel with skill and wisdom, and in a manner so tender and affectionate that the mind of her little boy became calm. A

* Sketch of his early life by A. E. Phelps.

soothing Gospel on the lips of a loving mother, how soothing! Such a mother never dies, though she may be early called home. He was devotedly attached to his mother. The flame of divine love burned brightly in her heart. She gave her children to God, one by one, *at their birth*; and Asahel Elihu she consecrated to the service of God, as of old Hannah consecrated Samuel. It was her wish that God would call him to the work of the ministry. For this she prayed. She frequently took her children into her own chamber and prayed earnestly for their conversion. A mother in the midst of her precious children pleading for God's blessings! What a spectacle for the angels!

"Ah, my tender babes!

My unblown flowers, new-appearing sweets." *

Her work was soon done, but never to be undone. When Asahel was ten years of age his dear mother went to be an angel.

"Early, bright, transient,

Chaste as morning dew,

She sparkled, was exhaled,

And went to heaven." †

*went an angel
an heir of God*

Asahel was lonely indeed without his mother. Though he strictly observed the forms of religion, he felt his unfitness for heaven more pain-

* Shakespeare.

† Young.

fully and palpably than ever before. His mother was in heaven, and he felt he was on the road to endless night. An old colored man, whom he esteemed highly, taught him that he could not be converted until he was twelve years of age. He longed for the time to come when he could throw himself at the feet of Jesus and receive the pardon of all his sins. "Old Tom" said he must wait a *little* longer, and he waited in deep concern for his soul's salvation. At length the day came—his twelfth birthday; and on that morning he arose very early, fell upon his knees, and gave himself up to the service of God. In a few months he was happily converted, and could joyfully sing:

“My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for his child,
I can no longer fear.
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba, Father, cry.”

“He then had the fullest assurance that the life of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the love of sin and death.”* Then his life sped on sweetly and swiftly. He was alike joyful in the domestic circle, in the school-room, or corn-field. He did not strive

* Sketch by himself.

to supplement his happiness by seeking worldly amusements or society. The religion of Jesus was a satisfying portion to him. And now the Methodist Episcopal Church received him on probation, and became his nursing mother. His dear, sweet mother had gone to heaven, and he missed her much, but the Church gave him more than a mother's tender care.

At the age of eighteen his father sent him to Charleston, Indiana, and he became an apprentice to a cabinet-maker, Littleton Houston, his uncle. It cost him a great struggle to turn away forever from the home and scenes of his early youth; but there was no appeal, and he entered earnestly upon the work of his new occupation. He was very lonely. There were few young people in that place who professed to be Christians. Many bitterly reviled Christ and his followers. Young Phelps *wavered*, kept his Church letter in his trunk, and failed to confess Christ before his wicked associates. The Holy Spirit was grieved, and could no longer witness to his justification. He still rigidly observed the forms of religion in secret, but without spirit and heart, and without spiritual enjoyment. He was in great darkness. He could not wickedly depart from the early instructions of his godly mother, break his

most solemn vows to God, and plunge into willful sin; he could not enjoy the pleasures of his worldly associates without incurring condemnation, and he was very unhappy. The admonitions, prayers, and pious teachings of his mother were sounding in his ears by day and by night; neither the labors of the day nor the slumbers of the night brought rest to his troubled mind.

For months he lingered in this sad condition, but finally, driven almost to madness by remorse for his backslidings, he went forward to the altar of prayer, and, after an earnest struggle, in a few hours he obtained a renewal of the evidence of his acceptance. One day, while engaged at his shop, a fortune-teller called, and said: "Let me tell your fortune. You will yet become a Methodist minister, travel extensively in the West, become noted in your denomination, be poor until the last seven years of your life, when you will become rich, die a miserable drunkard, and go to hell at last." He did not believe in fortune-telling or tellers; but this message startled him. He had already been powerfully moved by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel, "but a trembling sense of his own incompetency for so great a work deterred him from offering him-

self for the ministry; and nothing but a fearful apprehension of losing his soul induced him to make preparations for the work of the ministry."

Henry Summers* was present when he was licensed to preach. A popular local preacher present said that young Phelps "had too much top-sail for the hull," that "he would certainly capsize." Jas. Armstrong was present, though Samuel Hollister was the presiding elder.

Good but unwise men not unfrequently mistake zeal for bigotry, and thus devoted young men are hindered at a time when delay is fatal to final success.

The fear that he would lose his own soul prompted him to assume the responsibilities of the ministerial office. He began, however, to make preparations to obey the divine command. His educational advantages had been indifferent. He studied English grammar under the direction of W. L. Deneen,† and mastered it in three months. He was appointed class-leader, then licensed to exhort, and finally to preach.‡

He finished his trade at twenty-one years

* Rev. W. H. Summers to the author.

† Subsequently a member of the Illinois Conference.

‡ His sketch does not say by whom.

of age. He still continued to study with great diligence. Whilst other young men of his age were engaged in "revelries by night," he pored over his books by torch-light.

In 1828 his recommendation to the old Illinois Conference was presented to that body by the beloved John Strange, at Madison, Ind. This Conference met in the Fall. In answer to the question, "Who are admitted on trial?" the General Minutes returned the names of John Van Cleve, Asa Beck, Cornelius Ruddell, W. L. Deneen, Asahel E. Phelps, Charles Bonner, John French, George Teas, Miles Huffaker, Harden A. Tarkington, John H. Benson, David Bruner. At that time this old border Conference was composed of fifty-nine preachers, and included within its bounds 18,840 members, white and colored. There were but seventeen Methodist Episcopal conferences, 1,817 traveling preachers, and 447,743 members in these United States. In that year the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada was organized; and in the same year, on the 23d day of August, at Staunton, Va., Bishop Enoch George passed from earth to heaven, saying, "Glory to God!"

The State of Illinois was then in its infancy. The old Illinois District comprised the largest

portion of the State. Many of the inhabitants were French, and of course opposed to Protestantism. A large minority of the settlers were in favor of slavery, and society was cut up into factions. The canal question, the school question, the State capital, and sham banking business, for some years continued to divide the public mind. Broil succeeded broil. The religious condition of the settlers may be anticipated. Illinois was a hot-bed of heretical isms. Infidelity was rife.

Asahel Elihu Phelps was appointed to the old Kaskaskia Circuit with Smith L. Robinson. Though a young man, S. L. Robinson was well fitted to superintend a circuit. His education was limited; but he was possessed of fine natural abilities, a musical voice, and a ready delivery. It is said that at the time of his conversion he was utterly unaccustomed to even the forms of religion, and in his joy, forgetting to restrain his pent-up emotions, he shouted, "Hello, Mister Jesus!" Young Phelps found him a genial companion, and in labors abundant.

Kaskaskia had formerly been the State capital. Kaskaskia Circuit included Randolph, Monroe, Perry, Jackson, and Washington Counties, and a portion of St. Clair. Between

Charlestown, where Mr. Phelps resided, and his new charge was a vast wilderness. How he reached it, what fatigue and exposure he endured, can be imagined, but not narrated. The early itinerants "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods," and left many thrilling experiences unrecorded.

Peter Cartwright was presiding elder of the Illinois district. He was then in his prime. He succeeded Samuel H. Thompson, who had been very popular, but utterly unlike Mr. Cartwright. During his stay on this district Peter Cartwright was preaching at a place where Elder Thompson had captivated all hearts. He proceeded a short time, then halted for a moment, gazed in silence, and broke out, in tones of independence: "I never *could* preach like any body else; I never *did* preach like any body else; I never *wanted* to preach like any body else." The spell was broken; some laughed, some cried, some shouted.

Young Robinson and Phelps were compelled to travel five hundred miles in making their "rounds." It was a six weeks' circuit, and in all that time they enjoyed but one rest day. There is no record of their trials on their charge this side of the judgment books, perhaps, but they reported an addition of 171

members and seventeen probationers. This was a glorious harvest.

Conference met at Edwardsville, Ind., September 18, 1829.* S. L. Robinson was appointed to the Sangamon Circuit—D. B. Carter was the junior preacher; A. E. Phelps was appointed to the Lebanon Circuit, with John Dew in charge. John Dew was a scholar and great student. With him Mr. Phelps made rapid progress in his studies. Lebanon was a strong circuit; the rides were short, the labors comparatively light, as Methodism was well established. His opportunities for study were excellent, and were well improved.

At the close of this year Conference met in Vincennes, Ind. Seventeen were admitted on trial, amongst whom were E. R. Ames and W. D. R. Trotter. A friendship sprang up between the former and Mr. Phelps that continued during the life of the latter. They were very unlike each other, but they were agreed in the glorious work of building up the cause of Christ. They were students alike, and alike courageous, and loved each other as did Jonathan and David.

Sixteen were received into full connection, but were not ordained because of the absence

* See General Minutes.

of the bishop.* Eight were elected to elders' orders. John Van Cleve was appointed to Kaskaskia; E. R. Ames, to Shoal Creek, with John Dew in charge; Richard Hargrave, to Carlisle; Thomas S. Hitt, to Indianapolis; Stephen R. Beggs, to Tazewell; Smith L. Robinson, to Galena Mission; Jesse Walker, Chicago Mission; Calvin W. Ruter, to Albany; John Sinclair, to Jacksonville; William D. R. Trotter, Apple Creek; and A. E. Phelps, to Salt Creek. This was a four weeks' circuit. He boarded at Athens. Decatur was on his charge; also the Baxter settlement, and Bethel school-house. Here he met for the first time Miss Charlotte Caterline; she rode to and from Church behind her father, in real primitive style. She was then about sixteen years of age. In a few months she was formally introduced to him. Her father, Joseph Caterline, was an ardent Methodist, and the preachers frequently tarried at his house; but Asahel E. Phelps soon found excuses for calling at other times than during his stated pastoral visits.

The Winter was severe, the snow five feet deep on a level surface. He was frequently

* The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright says the bishop was present, but the General Minutes must be our guide. See page 83, volume II.

"storm-stayed." There were many wild turkeys and deer in that vicinity. Young Phelps, though not a practiced hunter, shot several deer, many being killed in the deep snow. His labors were incessant. One morning he set out for a distant appointment, and traveled until weary before he made the unpleasant discovery that he was lost. After trying in vain to find his way, he threw the reins on his horse's neck, saying, as he stroked him: "Tom, I am lost; it may be that you can find the way out of this." His horse seemed to understand the situation, and made himself master of it by carrying his master back to the last night's stopping-place. Ignorant of his whereabouts, Mr. Phelps called out to the sleeping household, "Hello!" "What do you want at this time of night?" was the response of his late host. "I wish to stay all night." "I can not keep you; do not keep a public house." "But I *must* stay," urged the weary itinerant; "I am lost, and cold and hungry." "Why, brother Phelps, is that you? I did not know you." It is needless to say he had a warm reception. He had traveled all day and part of the night, only to reach his starting-point.

There was much political excitement at this

time in consequence of the Nullification Act of a South Carolina Convention and Legislature, that threatened the disruption of the Union. President Jackson issued a proclamation, warning those engaged in "fomenting a rebellion that the laws of the United States would be strictly enforced." Henry Clay came forward with a bill providing for a gradual reduction of the obnoxious duties. On the 3d of March it became a law, and the discord subsided. Still there was much excitement in regard to the National Bank, against which legislation had been urged and secured by the President.

This continued excitement led Mr. Phelps to prepare and deliver an able sermon on National Religion. He called attention to the fact that card-playing was in direct violation of the laws of Illinois. Horse-racing was likewise positively forbidden. That loading and unloading freights on the Sabbath was wrong; that boatmen had no right to compel others to violate the Sabbath, as they must do when their goods are put ashore on that day. He dealt heavy blows at law-makers for allowing the sale of intoxicants as a beverage. He declared it to be "murder by wholesale and by law." "All will admit that it is a fruitful

source of crime; that most of the family and neighborhood broils, of the murders and suicides, much of the pauperism, poverty, and wretchedness, moral and physical degradation in our country, is directly or indirectly traceable to the use of ardent spirits. . . .

“That slavery is an evil, and one, too, of the deepest dye, will be disputed by none. I do not design to concern myself with modern abolitionism. I do not wish to agitate a question of such an irritable character, one which so influences the public mind. I will say, however, that the measures of modern abolitionists I do not approve, and never did. I conceive that the measures which they advocate are not calculated to produce the desired result; but that slavery is an evil, and that the General Government, or the individual States in which it exists, should devise such means as would remedy the evil as soon as may be practicable. Slavery is an evil which even the slave-holder himself deplors. There are but few at present, even in the slave States, who will plead for it. This may evidently be ranked among our national sins.

“That there is also much political corruption and intrigue among our officers of state, and our Legislative and Congressional departments,

scarcely admits of dispute. Look at our State Legislature. Every session exhibits scenes of vice and crime, startling and appalling to every friend of virtue. Those who have been present during the sessions of our Legislature can bear witness to the depravity and corruption there exhibited. There stands a stupendous building, erected almost exclusively for the purpose of gambling, for the use of members and visitors.”

His reference to the General Government was reverential, but scathing. He thought the pulpit should be heard on all questions of reform.

He had good success this year, and at its close reported an accession of one hundred and six members. Conference was held at Indianapolis. There had been two deaths during the year. Edwin Ray died on his way to Conference. His father, John Ray, was a preacher, and wrote cheering words to members of the Conference, saying, “The news of his death was not so afflicting to me as a *location*.” Edwin Ray closed his earthly career at the house of Mr. Barnes. He said to his wife, “The religion which I have preached to others now sustains me in death.” James Bankson died at St. Louis Hospital, after a very painful surgical operation. He was born

in Georgia, but had lived in Illinois since he was eight years old. Notwithstanding he had traveled frontier circuits, he had become well versed in Greek and Hebrew. He died triumphantly, September 4, 1831.

Fourteen were ordained deacons by Bishop R. R. Roberts, among whom were John Van Cleve, Wm. L. Deneen, Boyd Phelps, and Asahel Elihu Phelps. The conference year had been very fruitful,—3,230* had been added to the Church. Of the eleven who were received on trial at this Conference, John T. Mitchell and Wm. M. Daily were prominent.

A. E. Phelps was appointed to Sangamon Circuit, with John Sinclair in charge.

* Including colored people.

CHAPTER SECOND.

ALTON—CARROLLTON—CARLISLE.

J. Sinclair—Springfield—Mr. Phelps accused of Pride—His Marriage—Camp-meeting—Conference at Jacksonville—H. Summers—Peter R. Borein—Z. Hall and Wilson Pitner received—Indiana Conference set off—J. Strange—R. Hargrave—Martin Ruter—J. Armstrong—E. R. Ames—Presiding Elders—Mr. Phelps at Alton—Outfit—Removed to the County—A Sleepy Worshiper—Ordained by Bishop Soule—Appointed to Carrollton—Resides at Whitehall—Hot Summer—The First-born—Camp-meeting—Simon Peter—William Mavity—Pitner—Rawlston—Crews—Beggs—Mitchell—Akers—Hall—Mr. Phelps at Carlisle—Cholera—Elder Barger.

REV. JOHN SINCLAIR had spent several years in the Kentucky Conference, where he had been associated with such men as Thomas A. Morris, Martin Ruter, and J. Stamper. In this Conference he was ordained elder in 1828. In 1829 he spent his last year in the Kentucky Conference, in charge of the Winchester Circuit. T. Wallace was his colleague, and G. W. Taylor his presiding elder. In 1830 he was transferred to the Illinois Conference and stationed at Jacksonville. He was well fitted to a charge, and was in every way a worthy man. He was a pleasant companion.

The association of these two men of God on the Sangamon Circuit was mutually beneficial. A. E. Phelps was a man of taste and much independence. J. Sinclair was very plain, sincerely devout, a rigid disciplinarian, and very much attached to the Church of his choice. A. E. Phelps was likewise very strongly attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Springfield was in the bounds of the old Sangamon Circuit. Mr. Phelps was studious, and also scrupulously careful in his attention to his personal appearance. At one appointment some old-style Methodists began to look upon him with slight jealousy on account of his fine appearance. Mr. Phelps discovered the occasion of their reproachful attitude, and went among them in plain apparel, and they became his fast friends and earnest helpers. He was then an able preacher. A sermon preached by him from John xx, 30, 31, at a camp-meeting at Walter's Grove, is yet remembered and referred to by some who heard it.

At the close of this year he was united in marriage to Miss Charlotte Caterline, at Athens, Ill., by Rev. J. Sinclair. The young pair then went on horseback to the Springfield Camp-meeting. There were but few itinerant ministers present. The local ministers took an

active part in the labors of the meeting. The camp was in the vicinity of Mrs. Phelps's home. Her father, who was an exhorter in the Church, had a tent on the ground, so that Mr. Phelps and his youthful bride were very much at home. He preached several times during the meeting. Many were converted.

Conference was held at Jacksonville, September 25, 1832. The increase in membership was 1,469, including colored and Indians. Twelve were received on trial, as in 1828, and several of this number became apostles of Methodism in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Peter Borein, Henry Summers, Zadok Hall, Wilson Pitner,*—the most eccentric man that ever filled a Methodist Pulpit—were of "the twelve." During the year William H. Askins died, April 29th. He lived beloved, and died lamented. The Indiana Conference, it having been set off from the Illinois, took many val-

*It is related that he had concluded to go to school and prepare for the ministry, and had actually made preparations for starting, but felt impressed to pray to God for direction in the matter. "He went to the adjoining wood, and, after hunting around some time for a suitable place, he selected a nice sumach-tree, on the forks of which he laid his chin and began. His burden of soul came upon him, and the tree split under the pressure. He then found a hickory-tree, and in its strong fork he laid his chin and prayed until with *him* the case was settled, and he went home and joined Conference."

uable preachers and 20,035 members, and left 10,225. John Strange, Richard Hargrave, Calvin Ruter, James Armstrong, Allen Wiley, and E. R. Ames would meet in the old Illinois Conference no more except as visitors. M. S. Taylor, John S. Barger, Simon Peter, and Peter Cartwright were the presiding elders. Jesse Walker was superintendent of Chicago Mission; Henry Summers was sent to Rushville; Peter Borein, to Canton; Zadok Hall, to Peoria Mission; and A. E. Phelps to Alton.

Mr. Phelps, with his bride, proceeded to Alton on horseback. There was no parsonage on the circuit. They rented two rooms, and began housekeeping with *three chairs*, a *bed*, and a *large stand* for a table. Mrs. Phelps cooked by an old-style fire-place. They were without carpets and pictures. The charge had ten appointments, and Mr. Phelps was absent ten days on each "round." His salary was \$100 for himself, and \$100 for his wife. This was a small amount, but it did not cost much to live in those primitive times. At this time he wrote his sermons out in full, but neither committed to memory nor read what he had written. This was a year of great prosperity.*

* They lived with a brother Scarret, occupying a part of the house.

In the Spring he removed to the country. The good lady with whom they resided was industrious, and could not keep awake during the sermon. Mr. Phelps told her to take a blanket and pillow, and lie down! She was very kind, and helped to beguile many lonely days for Mrs. Phelps. Being much alone, the latter greatly appreciated this lady's kindness. During the year her father came to see her. She ran out, threw her arms around his neck, and cried for joy. After an effort to release himself, he said, "Why, daughter, if I had known it would make you feel so badly I would have stayed at home." Her husband was constantly busy during the year. He purchased a buggy, then called *dearborn* (and it *was* "dear" to them). In it, sometimes alone and sometimes in company with his wife, he sped from place to place until Conference closed his work on that charge.

The Illinois Conference met this year at Union Grove, St. Clair County, on September 25, 1833. The increase was 3,102; total number of members within the bounds of Conference, 13,421. The deficiency in the salaries of the preachers was heavy.* Mr. Phelps re-

* Possibly the Black Hawk War had something to do with their deficiency.

ported a deficiency of \$108.19. There were thirty-nine claimants upon the Conference funds. The sum of \$665 was divided among twelve claimants and the bishops.

Simeon Walker, Asahel E. Phelps, John E. French, and Barton Randall were ordained elders by Bishop Soule, at the house of Wm. Padfield, October 3, 1833. Mr. Phelps was appointed to Carrollton Circuit; C. B. N. McCabe was the junior preacher. Mr. Phelps resided at White Hall,* and moved his goods in a wagon. The distance from his last place of residence on Alton Circuit was about forty miles. The membership at White Hall was small. Carrollton was much larger, but the Church was weak. Mr. Phelps and his colleague worked faithfully, and many souls were brought into the fold of Christ. The Summer was extremely hot,—so hot that much of the time it was necessary either to travel in the evening or go on a slow walk. During the Summer Mr. Phelps lived at Looking Glass Prairie. There George H. was born, August 6, 1834. Ten days after this, their camp-meeting near White Hall began, and Mrs. Phelps was compelled to accept the hospitality of kind friends, who insisted on her removal

* In the house of a brother Davidson.

to the camp-ground. Simon Peter, then presiding elder of the Sangamon District, was present, yet Mr. Phelps was very much engaged in the meeting.

Shortly after this he spent a few days in visiting his father, near Danville. This was the first time Mrs. Phelps had seen her father-in-law. During their stay Mr. Phelps preached in his father's house to a large congregation. His father was delighted with the sermon.

Conference met at Mount Carmel, Wabash County, October 1, 1834. Mr. Phelps and Mr. M'Cabe reported an increase of sixty-three members. The Illinois Conference reported \$545.08 missionary money, and \$46.25 for the publishing fund. William Mavity had died in August. He had "lived a pious life and died a pious death." * There had been an increase of 1,676. Barton H. Cartwright and seven others were admitted on trial. Ten were ordained deacons, of whom were Henry Summers, James Mitchell, Zadok Hall, and Wilson Pitner. Young Pitner had a horror of grammar, and refused to study it. He was appointed to preach before the Conference.† It was a

* Conference Minutes.

† Have no data as to what Conference year this was. This is one of the many traditions of this eccentric man.

great cross to him to do so. When the time arrived, in making the opening prayer, he alluded to his ignorance of grammar, and in the presence of so many learned men he exclaimed, "O Lord, help poor Pitner!" By this time he had the sympathy of all his critics, and proceeded to preach with great power. T. N. Ralston was one of the five elected to elders' orders. Hooper Crews was appointed Superintendent of the Galena Missionary District; Stephen R. Beggs went to Bureau Mission; John Sinclair was Presiding Elder on the Chicago District, and John T. Mitchell was Pastor of the Chicago Missionary Station. Peter Akers was reappointed President of M'Kendree College. W. D. R. Trotter was a teacher in Pleasant Plains Academy. Henry Summers was sent to Canton; Zadok Hall, to Bloomington; and A. E. Phelps, to Carlisle.

At the close of Conference Mr. Phelps, in company with his wife, made a visit to Martinsville, Ind., where the widow of his brother George resided. Whilst there he saw his old nurse, whom he esteemed very highly. In making this journey he traveled with one horse and carriage. During the trip there was but one rainy day. Mr. Phelps was cheerful and communicative, and the journey did not seem

long. On reaching his charge he found great difficulty in procuring a house. At first the people seemed distant, but they soon manifested their friendship in many ways. The cholera raged in some parts of the circuit. A young man died of it at the house in which Mr. Phelps lived.* Carlisle was a very wicked town of perhaps two thousand people.

In March, 1835, he prepared and delivered the following sermon on the fifteenth Psalm:

“Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.”

The Book of Psalms contains one hundred and fifty spiritual hymns or songs of Zion, composed at different times, on different occasions, and by different men, and therefore embraces a great variety of subjects admirably adapted to the diversified conditions and circumstances of Christians in the present age, as well as to saints under the former dispen-

* Mr. Webster's house. A Christian merchant. His family and Mr. Phelps were much exposed, but did not take it.

sation. While some contain grand and sublime descriptions of the majestic glory and the inimitable perfections of the Deity, others extol his benevolence, love, and goodness to mankind. While some, again, contain prayers and supplications fervently addressed to a throne of grace for blessings and comforts, others are the mere effusions of the heart overflowing with gratitude to God for mercies bestowed. Others, again, contain lively and striking descriptions of the character, exercises, and enjoyments of the righteous. Perhaps no part of the Old Testament affords more striking and accurate descriptions of the enjoyments and character of the righteous than the Book of Psalms.

Our text is of the latter class mentioned. It contains a description of the righteous. The Psalmist here first describes the righteous man positively, and secondly, negatively. He first tells what he does do, and secondly, what he does not do—what he refrains from. This character the Psalmist introduces to our view by proposing an interrogatory, by asking a question, “Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?” This Psalm is in the form of a dialogue. The Psalmist proposes a question, and God is represented as answering it, or

suggesting the answer to the mind of the Psalmist.

The tabernacle of the Lord, in its original sense, was a kind of movable temple, built by order of Moses, under the direction of God, on their march from Egypt to Canaan, in which the ark of the covenant was placed, with the mercy-seat; where the Shekinah dwelt, a visible symbol of the divine presence; and where God condescends to hold converse with the children of Israel through Moses and Aaron, and where his glory was displayed. This tabernacle was carried with the camp of Israel, on the shoulders of the priests or Levites; and even after they arrived in the Holy Land this tabernacle had no permanent or fixed place of residence, but was moved about from place to place in the care of the priests and judges of Israel, and is thus a striking emblem of the Church of God on earth in this state of discipline and trial. The Church is here exposed to pelting storms and tempests. Her members are here driven and tossed over life's boisterous ocean, exposed to difficulties, trials, and afflictions; here the saints of God have no permanent residence or inheritance. They are strangers and pilgrims, seeking a city out of sight, whose maker and builder is

God. In this state of discipline and trial the Christian need never expect perfect bliss and happiness; his enjoyment will be often interrupted by trouble and sorrow. Here he will be tempted and tried, buffeted by Satan, and derided by the world. Therefore the Church below is fitly represented by the tabernacle.

Secondly, "Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" This part of the question the Psalmist proposes prophetically or prospectively,—this he asks in view of the temple of God which was subsequently erected at Jerusalem. Although the temple at that time, probably, was not commenced, yet the Psalmist, under divine inspiration, speaks of it as then completed. This was not done till the succeeding age, by his son Solomon. The temple is said to have been built upon an eminence in Jerusalem, previously called Zion, on Mount Zion, and therefore the temple itself is called the hill of the Lord, or holy hill, as it stood upon a hill or mountain. The temple at Jerusalem, in point of architecture, curious and beautiful workmanship, costliness, splendor, and magnificence, perhaps excelled any thing the world had ever beheld. It was the astonishment and admiration of surrounding nations. Not to mention the exterior of this superstructure, the holy of

holies was twenty cubits square, all handsomely ceiled, even to the very floor, with the most refined and pure gold, with two cherubim spreading forth their golden wings, touching the wall on each side with the extremity of their wings, and overshadowing the mercy-seat, where the divine Shekinah dwelt.

As the temple was permanent, and designed to stand through the revelations of time to the end of the Jewish polity, till after the scepter shall have departed from Judah, and as it excelled in glory any superstructure, perhaps, the world had ever beheld, it was a proper emblem or type of heaven, of that state of perfect rest and consummate bliss and happiness which awaits the righteous beyond the confines of the grave, beyond the shores of time. This St. Paul clearly intimates when writing to the Hebrews; he there represents the temple with its various equipage as a figure of heaven, of the New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven.

And, therefore, as the tabernacle represented the Church militant, and the temple at Jerusalem the Church triumphant—on the one side the Church below, and on the other the Church above—the question proposed may be paraphrased thus: Lord, who shall abide in

thy tabernacle? who shall be recognized as an acceptable member of thy Church on earth? who shall enjoy thy approving smiles here? who shall be considered worthy to dwell in thy presence and be called an "Israelite indeed," seeing that all are not Israel who are of Israel? And who shall dwell in thy holy hill? who shall be considered worthy of eternal life at last? who shall be admitted into that state of consummate bliss and perfect rest typified or pointed out by the temple at Jerusalem?

The Psalmist then proceeds to answer the question: "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." In these words he gives the outlines of his character. He "walketh uprightly." He walks erect before God, he orders his steps aright, he has the fear of God continually before his eyes. To walk uprightly, to walk with God, etc., are figurative expressions, used in the Scriptures to imply entire obedience to the law of God, the observance of his commandments to discharge all the duties we owe to God. Therefore he that walks uprightly is one whose delight is in the law of God, and who meditates therein both day and night. He constantly lives with an eye single to the glory of God, and con-

stantly has his whole body full of light. He has consecrated himself unreservedly to God, and glorifies him in his body and spirit, which are the Lord's. He looks to the Word of God as the man of his counsel; by it he regulates his conduct and squares his life. He makes the glory of God his constant object in all he does. All the business of life is commenced, carried on, and completed with an eye to his glory. In short, this is his ultimate end and object through life. He also worketh righteousness. He not only loves God, and rests supremely satisfied and delighted in him, but he also delights in doing his will, in advancing his kingdom on earth and promoting his glory among men by every means within his reach.

Religion is not a mere speculative something that occupies only the head; it does not consist in theory, in any set of doctrines or opinions, however Scriptural those opinions or doctrines may be; nor does it consist in any peculiar frame of mind or set of feelings, or even enjoyment itself,—though it is true religion, when possessed in its moral excellence, will afford enjoyment. It will create a right frame of mind, a right set of feelings; but these are not religion itself. They are merely the effects or immediate fruits of religion. Religion I

understand to be simply the love of God shed abroad in the heart, influencing and controlling the life. So with the righteous man in the text; he not only possesses and enjoys religion, but he also practices it,—he works righteousness. He is actively and constantly engaged in doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible to all men.

Every man may be contemplated as sustaining a relation both to God and to his neighbor or to his fellow-beings. Each of these relations gives birth to a certain class of duties. The relations he sustains to God bring him under obligations to God, and the relations he sustains to his neighbor give birth to certain duties to him; and to be a Christian or a righteous man he must discharge his duties of both classes, both those he owes to God and his fellow-men. Therefore the righteous man is engaged in doing good, not only to bodies, but also to the souls of men. He not only feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, visits the sick, relieves the suffering, but he admonishes and exhorts with all long-suffering and doctrine, and by every possible means labors to improve their moral condition and advance their spiritual interest. That man who would shut religion, as it were, up in his own

heart, or restrain its influence to his own family or connection, or even to his own neighborhood. That man who feels no concern about sinners, or for their salvation, must be a stranger to the spirituality of religion ; for wherever religion is possessed, in its life and spirit, it will inspire the breast of its possessor with an ardent desire to bring others to its enjoyment, to a participation in its blessings. Wherever religion fills the heart it will awaken a concern for the salvation of sinners, for all men. Therefore, the individual that feels no such concern is destitute of religion itself. The man that possesses religion in all its moral excellence is a man of zeal, of perseverance in well-doing ; he is indefatigable in his work and labor of love. He is not a nuisance to society, he is not a neutral in the ranks, and not a blank in creation ; but he is a man of usefulness, and is always engaged in doing good. No matter whether an official or private member in the Church, no matter how limited his talents or acquirements, he feels that he has a work to do in the Church, and that work he willingly and zealously performs. He views the Gospel as placed in the hands of the Church, and the means of extending the Redeemer's kingdom as placed within her reach, and the members

individually held responsible to God for the manner in which they use those means ; therefore he actively co-operates with the Church in every benevolent institution, in every religious enterprise, which confessedly have for their object the spread of the Gospel, the diffusion of Scriptural knowledge, and the salvation of the world.

The man mentioned here by the Psalmist makes religion his business ; he only lives to get good and do good ; therefore, wherever he is, Christ is the subject of his conversation. Next to his own salvation he feels the greatest concern for those around him. He carries the sacred leaven with him wherever he goes. He considers no man unworthy of his attention, none too low, if he can only be instrumental thereby in benefiting the souls of others. In short, he lets no means or no opportunity of doing good pass unimproved.

“He worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.” He not only walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, but he is also a man of truth, of candor, of veracity. He is a man fully worthy of public and private confidence, on whose word the utmost reliance may be placed. He is a stranger to hypocrisy, to dissimulation ; he never acts in disguise

under a mask or under a cloak; his words and actions are the real sentiments of his heart. He meets all his engagements, complies with all his contracts, and holds his word or promise sacred. He not only avoids the common practice of lying, but also despises misrepresentation. He never exaggerates, magnifies, or gives coloring to any thing. He never tries to deceive. He avoids every kind of phraseology which would be likely to mislead. He never tells a part of the truth and keeps back a part, in view of deceiving. When a man tells a part of the truth and keeps back a part, with a design to deceive, it amounts to a positive lie, and is equally culpable in the eyes of the divine law. Hence the man presented before us by the Psalmist studiously avoids every kind of language which has a tendency to mislead. He holds himself responsible for every false or erroneous impression his records are calculated to make upon the minds of others. He is not responsible for the mistakes of others, for their misconceptions or misunderstandings of his words; but he is responsible for using language with a design of misleading. He remembers that he will have to give an account to God for every idle word; therefore he sets a watch on his lips and bridles his

tongue. This man not only speaks the truth accidentally or occasionally, but he speaks it in his heart, says the word he aims at; he studies it at all times and under all circumstances. He is a man of truth in every respect; his heart and life are in complete conformity to the principles of divine truth. His conduct, his life throughout, is a precise picture of his heart. Therefore he neither deceives by his words nor his actions.

“He that backbiteth not with his tongue.” The Psalmist having in the preceding verse given a kind of general description of the righteous, having drawn the outlines of his character, now proceeds to a more minute description. Backbiting—that is, speaking evil of an absent neighbor, telling of a man’s faults in his absence. Evil-speaking, tale-bearing, evil-whispering, and such like, are all embraced under the head of backbiting. Some seem to think that they do their neighbors no injustice, no moral wrong, to speak of their faults, in case we do not magnify them or exaggerate; but I apprehend in this case we are guilty of a positive violation of the law of God, and a departure from the apostolic injunction, which is, “Brethren, speak not evil one of another,” and again, “Speak evil of no man.”

In speaking evil of our neighbor we not only do an injustice when he has no opportunity of self-vindication or defense, but we do the settlement at large an injury, and greatly hinder the progress of religion. A few remarks made about an absent brother, even without any design of injuring him, and understood so by the person to whom they are made, many times effect much mischief in the end. They are handed from one to another till the whole neighborhood is sometimes agitated, inflamed, and set on fire. How true it is, how great a matter a little fire kindles! The tongue is a world of iniquity. It setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. Evil reports on our neighbor are not apt to lose much by way of transportation; they very seldom grow much better on their passage; but, on the contrary, the farther they go the worse they get. Like the fulminating cloud charged with electric matter, the farther it travels the more it accumulates, the more fearful and alarming is its appearance,—just so with such reports, the farther they go the worse they grow, the more destructive and withering their influence. Such is the depravity of our natures that we can scarcely speak of men's faults in their absence

without some misrepresentation, without exaggerating a little, or giving some false coloring; therefore we should be very careful not to have any thing to say about any one of an injurious character in his absence.

The old adage on this subject, I think, is an excellent one: "Speak of no man's virtues to his face, nor of his faults behind his back." Much evil which now exists would be remedied were this rule universally observed. But I apprehend it does not require us designedly to conceal, much less to encourage, the petty faults of others; but it forbids our publishing them to the world, speaking of them in the absence of the subject, unless the cause of Christ absolutely requires them to be exposed. But if your brother has faults that you believe to be serious, and are of a pernicious tendency, there is a remedy prescribed in the Gospel; that is, "If thy brother offend thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Do it in such love, with such mildness, and in such a spirit as to convince him that you aim not to offend, not to wound, but to benefit him; that his good and the good of the Church are the only objects you have in view. But if unsuccessful in this, the second step prescribed is, "Take one or two with thee," that

reproof administered in a proper spirit in the presence of faithful witnesses may have its desired effect; but if still unsuccessful you are to inform the Church, or “publish it before the Church,” in the third place; and if the offender remain impenitent expulsion is indispensable. This rule, I apprehend, however, was not designed to apply to private offenses. “If thy brother offend thee,” said our Lord, *as an individual*, not the Church of God. But reason would teach that private confession and acknowledgment can never arrest the bad tendency of a public offense; private acknowledgment can never take away the reproach that a public offense has brought upon the Church. Therefore, for a public offense a public prosecution should be commenced, and a public acknowledgment at last should be required. But even in that case, or in case of expulsion, we should still respect the member thus cut off, and should not expose his faults any more than the cause of Christ requires.

“Nor doeth evil to his neighbor.” He does his neighbor no injury in any way whatever, neither his person, his interest, his character, nor his reputation. He holds his character sacred, and regards his interest as he regards his own. He is not required to study his

neighbor's interest as he studies his own; yet I apprehend if he loves his neighbor as he loves himself it will restrain him from doing any thing to his neighbor he would not have done to himself, and thus to regard every man's interest and welfare as he regards his own. Consequently he never pursues any business in life which might conflict with his neighbor's interest, his present or eternal welfare. He never labors to enrich his coffers at his neighbor's expense.

Here let me ask, Can any man that distills, vends, or sells ardent spirits, either by wholesale or retail, be said to do his neighbor *no evil*? I apprehend not. All such are striving to promote their interest and enrich their coffers at the expense of ruining their neighbor's soul and body for time and eternity, his character and reputation; at the expense of beggaring, reducing his wife to poverty and distress, and disgracing and reproaching his connection. That man who would furnish the antagonist with a weapon to murder his friend, and then destroy his own life, is certainly accessory to the crime, and is equally guilty with the murderer himself. This is precisely the light in which the vender of ardent spirits is to be viewed. He not only furnishes his

neighbor with the means of murdering himself, but of robbing his family of the comforts and necessities of life, and at last of ruining them and himself, both soul and body. All such are both robbers and murderers in the sight of God; and even worse than that, for they murder the soul as well as the body. The righteous man doeth his neighbor no evil. The word neighbor here is evidently used in its most common acceptation in the Scripture, to signify all men.

But there is still another way in which we may do a man an injury, and that is in withholding information, advice, counsel, or assistance when he needs it, and is likely to suffer without it. Did we see combinations or conspiracies formed against him? Did we see evil designed against him, either to his person, his property, or his character? Did we see him about to suffer wrongfully in any way whatever? and did we withhold from him that information or assistance in that case? If so, we did him an injury. In informing our neighbor of evil designed against him we could not be considered tale-bearing or evil-speaking, if we do it in order to save him from suffering wrongfully. In that case we discharge a duty we owe to him, no matter whether he

is our friend or enemy, whether he hates or loves us. There is an old maxim that he who would not save life when he has it in his power is a murderer, and should be dealt with accordingly; and I apprehend the principle will hold good in morality, in all cases, that he who has it in his power to save his neighbor from any injury whatever, without too great a sacrifice on his part, and will not do it, is accessory to the wrong his neighbor suffers, and is consequently guilty in the sight of God. So the righteous man is represented in Scripture as doing his neighbor no evil.

“Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor.” This may imply two things. First, he does not readily believe evil of any man, and is exceedingly unwilling to believe evil tidings of any man. Charity thinketh no evil. That man who is entirely under the influence of charity or love does not readily form an opinion of any person. He examines the subject well; he matures, weighs, and requires the most convincing evidence, such as he can not resist, before he can be induced to believe evil of any man. Even when convinced of the fact that his neighbor did wrong, and has by crime brought reproach upon himself, he still puts the most favorable construction possible

upon it; he hopes that the circumstances were of such a nature as to palliate the offense, or at least that his motives were good. Thus he taketh not up a reproach, and does not easily believe reproachful reports of others.

He not only opposes the grosser vices, but also the most fashionable and popular ones, as well as others. How many of us possess this kind of courage? How many of us take a bold, fearless, and decisive stand against sin? On the other hand, how often do we feel such modesty, or such a fear of losing our popularity, that we fear to take an open stand against vices, particularly those that are most common? If we do not justify them or countenance them, we dread to oppose them. It is not so with the Psalmist. He openly and fearlessly opposed every thing of the kind, all vice and crime, without exception. But he honoreth them that fear the Lord. Such is his love for virtue, his veneration for the religion of the Bible, his holy reverence for God, that he honoreth them that fear him; he feels a peculiar respect, a very tender regard, for the true Christian. The fear of God is many times taken for the whole of godliness, the whole of religion, and in this sense I apprehend it is used in the text. He honoreth

them that fear the moral image of God, them that prove themselves by their conduct to be the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus.

“He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.” He affirms the truth under the solemnities of an oath without any regard to consequences. Although that truth which he affirms may directly conflict with his interest, yet he swerves not on that account. He speaks the truth on all such occasions, as well as others, regardless of consequences, or the smiles or frowns of others. He is willing to sacrifice the favor of men, his dearest worldly interest, and life, if required, for the sake of the truth; this he holds more sacred than any thing else.

“And changeth not.” Others may change, circumstances may change, time may effect various revolutions, but he remains unshakenly and inflexibly attached to the truth; and should the very truths which he has espoused and affirmed be brought into derision, and treated with contempt, he remains unaffected and unmoved. He is firm and immutable in his adherence to truth, however he may change in other matters where no moral principle is involved, as truth itself. . . .

But where my neighbor is driven by poverty or pressing necessity to borrow money to secure him a home or the necessities of life, and I take the advantage of his necessities and make money out of his misfortune, of his emergency and distress, it would be usury in the extreme, extortion in the highest degree. This the righteous man mentioned in our text does not do. He oppresses or injures no man by speculating with his money. In a word, he does precisely to others as he would that they should do unto him.

Lastly, he taketh not a reward against the innocent. He can not be bribed; no price will purchase him, or induce him to pervert justice. No incentive that can be presented to his mind, no reward that can be offered, can possibly enlist him against the innocent, no matter what their poverty, what their ignorance, what their social affiliation.

“That man” may be forsaken by his friends, deserted by his relatives; he may be bereft of every worldly comfort, and stripped of all his earthly fortune. Earth and hell may even combine against him, the artillery of the infernal regions may be leveled at him—in a word, all opposing powers may assail him; but the promises of God are still pledged to his pro-

tection, the arms of Omnipotence will environ him around, his grace will still support him.

"He shall never be moved."

The year passed off pleasantly, though unmarked by noted revivals on that circuit. John S. Barger was the presiding elder of the district. At a quarterly-meeting, April 19, 1835, Mr. and Mrs. Phelps presented George for baptism. Elder Barger administered the holy ordinance with great solemnity.

During the year Mr. Phelps devoted much time to the work of preparation for the pulpit. He prepared and delivered a searching sermon on "The Cross," from Matthew xvi, 24. He regarded Christ's declaration that his followers "must suffer persecution" as "well calculated to inspire all with the belief that he was not an impostor;" that "sin is inviting to the natural man;" that "some who compromise will make disciples, but that Jesus required his followers to take up the cross and follow him." "The work of sanctification is commenced in the act of regeneration, but not completed. This is a subsequent attainment. This is received by faith, either gradually or instantaneously, after regeneration. Regeneration frees us from the power and dominion, but not

from the inbeing of sin. The carnal mind is subdued, but not exterminated. This is effected by sanctification. Were our natures entirely sanctified we would still have need of watching ourselves, but more particularly until this is attained. After we have obtained religion, whoever will observe closely the state of his own mind will find passions, affections, desires, appetites, and propensities at times lurking within him, which are sinful and unholy in themselves, and if not suppressed would soon bring forth practical infidelity. He will often find strong indications to anger, wrath, envy, resentment, revenge, malice, backbiting, evil-speaking, tale-bearing, to covetousness, the love of the world, to strife, to sedition, to pride, and almost every other species of vice. And these must be suppressed in their very first motions, their germ, or they will bring forth death."

His views on a great doctrine are clearly set forth in the preceding remarks. His view was the common doctrine of the fathers in those days.

CHAPTER THIRD.

HIS LABORS ON PEKIN CIRCUIT—PEORIA MISSION.

Conference at Springfield—G. G. Worthington—Richard Haney—B. T. Kavanaugh—George Rutledge—Appointments—His Circuit—Parsonage—Well—Church—Birth of Agnes E.—Revival—Jesse Walker's Death—W. B. Mack—Number received on Trial—Prominent Appointments—Large Quarterly-meetings—Correspondence with William Davenport—Sermon on the Witness of the Spirit—Funeral of William H. Holt—Sermon on Baptism—Conference at Jacksonville—M. Bourn—T. J. Kirkpatrick—Pastor of Peoria Mission—Preached in the Court-house—Rev. Mr. Huntoon—Assaults Orthodox—Was vanquished by Mr. Phelps—Lectures—Conference at Alton—Nathan Jewett—Joseph Kirkpatrick—Increase—Michael S. Taylor's Death.

CONFERENCE was held at Springfield. The increase was very small, only two hundred and forty-two in the entire bounds of the Conference. Nineteen were admitted on trial. Of this number were G. G. Worthington, Richard Haney, B. T. Kavanaugh, George Rutledge. Alfred Brunson was sent as a missionary to the Indians on the Upper Mississippi; J. Woodworth, to Henderson Mission; H. Summers, to Knoxville Mission; W. C. Cummings, to Peoria Mission. S. L. Robinson

was transferred to Indiana Conference, and T. N. Ralston to Kentucky Conference. A. E. Phelps was appointed to Pekin; J. Arington was the junior preacher.

Mr. Phelps visited his father for the last time.* He then went to his new circuit. He preached at Pekin, Lacon,† Washington, Hennepin, Cedar Point, Oxbow, Crow Prairie, and several other places. From the first he drew great crowds to hear him preach. He was very active, and a fine speaker. The parsonage, the first he ever lived in, was at Washington. Finding no well on the lot, he proceeded to dig one, which he did by carrying the dirt out in a pail by means of a ladder. This required great labor. There was a good frame church at Washington. Mr. Phelps and his colleague worked earnestly.

Agnes Elleanor was born in Washington, August 14, 1837.

“A flower that does, with opening morn, arise,
And, flourishing the day, at evening dies.” ‡

“Between two worlds, life hovers like a star
‘Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon’s verge.” ||

* He was a consistent member of the Methodist Episcopal Church for fifty years, and died in peace at a ripe old age.

† Columbia then. D. Markley’s letter to the author.

‡ Prior. || Byron,

There was a good revival on the charge, and at the close of the year they reported an increase of seventy-seven.

The Conference met at Rushville, and reported an increase of seventeen hundred and eighty-six, forty-eight of whom were Indians who belonged to the Oneida Mission. Jesse Walker died October 5, 1835, during the session of the Conference. He came to Illinois, which was then a bleak wilderness, in 1807. "He died at his home in Cook County, in the bosom of his family, in full and confident hope of a blessed immortality." The Church also lost a man of fine talents at this Conference, W. B. Mack, who had fallen into gross immorality. He was presiding elder of the Chicago District at the time. He united with a sister Church, and continued in the ministry. Of the thirty-five admitted to the Conference on trial were Chauncy Hobart, Norris Hobart, C. J. Houts, William Haney, and Samuel Pillsbury. Henry Summers was presiding elder of Rock Island District. Richard Haney went to Mineral Point, in Wisconsin. J. Dew was President of M'Kendree College; and B. T. Kavanaugh, Agent. A. E. Phelps was returned to Pekin Circuit; John M'Murtry was his colleague.

There was a fine revival on the circuit. The quarterly-meetings were most excellent, and largely attended. One, held at Walnut Grove, is yet remembered with pleasure. At this meeting Mr. Phelps was surprised to see his father-in-law, Joseph Caterline, who had come sixty miles on horseback.

During this year Mr. Phelps was drawn into a correspondence with Mr. Davenport, of Walnut Grove, a minister of the Disciple Church. Mr. Davenport was the champion of this doctrine in Illinois. He had held a public discussion with a Methodist minister recently on the subject of Infant Baptism, with good success, and he was very anxious to renew the conflict with Mr. Phelps. The letters of Mr. Davenport show him to have been a man of some culture, a shrewd schemer, and a skilled debater. He labored so to arrange the propositions for discussion as to limit the Scriptural proofs to the New Testament. He thought the Book of Acts contained all necessary authority on the subject. Mr. Phelps replied quite at length to the letters of Mr. Davenport, and preached a sermon on the points at issue, to which Mr. Davenport replied, some time after. Then the correspondence ceased for a time.

He prepared and delivered a number of sermons on the doctrines of our Church, among which was this on the Witness of the Spirit:

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.—ROMANS VIII, 16.

Had the Christian been left in this life without a knowledge of his acceptance with his God, without any assurance that his sins were pardoned and that he was recognized as a child of God and heir of heaven, unfortunate would have been his condition, and unhappy, painful, must have been the suspense in which he was held, and extreme must have been the agitation and distress of his mind had he been left in this condition. No uncertainty can be so distressing and painful as that concerning our eternal destiny, our future happiness, to those who are fully awake to the subject, who are alive to the interest of their souls, as the Christian must necessarily be. Therefore, were his acceptance with his God involved in doubt, extreme uneasiness and distress of mind must have been the result. In that case the Christian would have all the duties of religion to discharge, all its restraints to bear, its persecutions and reproach to share, without its enjoyment, without its consolations; for unless we were conscious that we possessed it we could not enjoy

it. Without a sense of pardon and a consciousness that God had accepted us, it would be impossible to experience that peace and enjoyment which flows from the smiles and approbation of God. And should he at times even entertain a hope that his sins were forgiven, that hope, in the hour of peculiar trial and temptation, would evidently give place to distressing fear, if not to despair itself. Therefore, were the Christian left without a certain knowledge that his sins were pardoned, at most his mind would be agitated alternately. In this condition the Christian himself would descend to the grave with very timorous and trembling steps. The tomb to him would be a gloomy mansion. Hope might throw a transient, flickering ray of light upon his path in his descent, it is true; but without an assurance of God's pardoning mercy such a hope must necessarily be short-lived—would fluctuate, and consequently would render the darkness the more intense. Death would then be a fearful leap into the dark. But, thank Heaven! such is not the condition of the Christian; he is not left to grope his way in darkness; his acceptance with his God is not involved in doubt or uncertainty, nor is the fact concealed from his mind. It is his priv-

ilege to know that his sins are pardoned, and that God owns him for his child. This matter is not left to mere inference; nor is he reduced to the painful necessity of arriving at the fact by the laborious task of induction, but God himself writes a knowledge of the fact upon the heart. "The Spirit itself," says the text, "beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." The pardon of our sins, our personal acceptance with God and adoption into his family, are matters which take place in heaven, with God alone, and consequently it is impossible in the very nature of things that we should ever know them unless they are revealed by God himself. We might have some knowledge that our hearts were renewed by grace, that our burden was removed, that our sense of guilt was gone; but that our sins were pardoned, and God reconciled, are facts which we could not know unless by the teachings of the Divine Spirit.

That the Spirit mentioned in the text is the Spirit of God, or the Holy Spirit, is evident from the context. In the commencement of the chapter the apostle speaks of the happy state of the Christian. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, which walk not after the flesh,

but after the Spirit." Again, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And again, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." In direct connection with the text the apostle observes: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." The relation, therefore, which the text sustains to the preceding verses shows conclusively that the witness mentioned in the text is the Spirit of God. The agent by whom our hearts are renewed, our natures regenerated, is the very same Spirit by whom we are adopted into the family of God. No sooner is the sinner's pardon sealed in the court of heaven than a knowledge of it is written upon the heart; no sooner is he adopted into the family of God than the Divine Spirit is sent forth to witness the fact

to his spirit. In most instances this witness is given immediately after justification, but in some cases it may be delayed a short time; the new convert may not receive the full witness after regeneration sometimes for hours or even days, and in some rare instances it may be weeks before the evidence is so clear as to exclude all doubt. But still this witness is the privilege of every regenerated soul, and, in general, it immediately accompanies the pardon of sin.

This doctrine does not for its support rely merely upon the text, or even a few isolated passages of doubtful meaning, but upon the testimony of almost all of the inspired writers. When writing to the Corinthians the apostle says, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Here we not only have the witness of the Spirit asserted, but the object of the witness, "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." "That he might take of the things of God and show them unto us," that he might thus in mercy commit to the mind of his children what God had done for them. When writing to the Ephesians he observes, "After that ye believed

ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." This witness is here represented as given us as the pledge of our inheritance. This we have as an assurance of our inheritance in the day of redemption. The man, therefore, that has this witness in himself is fully assured of his heirship. When writing to the Galatians the apostle says, "Because ye are sons of God, God hath sent his spirit into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Here the apostle grounds this testimony upon the relationship that we sustain to God. "Because ye are sons." Here he clearly intimates that all who are sons had this witness; and of course those who had it not are not the children of God. St. John says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." And again, "And hereby we know that he abideth in us by his Spirit which he hath given us." St. Paul, when writing to his brethren, says, "Know ye not yourselves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobate?"

From the passages already quoted the conclusion seems inevitable that those who have not the witness of the Spirit have serious

reasons to fear that they are not the children of God. This conclusion is expressly warranted by the apostle in his letter to the Romans, when he says, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." It is true, some Christians may not have that clear, satisfactory evidence of their acceptance or witness within them that they desire, or that others have; but still it is their privilege, and the probability is that did they live nearer to God, and possess more of the spirituality of religion, that this testimony would be clearer. Such persons, however, should not cast away their confidence, which has great recompense of reward.

But it may be asked, What is the witness of the Spirit? how is this testimony borne? or how does the Spirit bear witness with ourselves? Some suppose that all we are to understand by the witness of the Spirit is an inward consciousness of a change of heart; but this is evidently the testimony of our spirits. The text contains two witnesses to the same fact—the Spirit of God, and our own spirit. These afford a joint testimony. The witnesses should not be confounded, nor should their testimony. The testimony of each is separate and distinct, though the subject of testi-

mony is the same. They both testify to the same thing. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits—in connection with our own. A consciousness, therefore, that our hearts have been changed is the testimony of our spirit. The question consequently returns, What is the testimony of the Divine Spirit? Some suppose that it implies nothing more than the implantation of holy tempers and dispositions within us—such as meekness, humility, faith, temperance, etc. But this I conceive to be confounding the witness of the Spirit with the fruits of the Spirit, which are things very different. The apostle, when writing to the Galatians, mentions these graces and moral excellences, and pronounces them the “fruits of the Spirit.” “The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.” These he considers fruits of the Spirit, and of course we must receive the Spirit before he can produce. Many of these spring directly from the witness of the Spirit itself—such as joy, love, peace; of course they suppose the pre-existence of the witness.

It is plain from the text and other corroborating Scriptures that the witness of the Spirit

is direct ; that it is some direct communication from the Divine Spirit to our minds. But how this testimony is given, or the precise manner in which the Spirit does bear witness with ours, it may be difficult to explain. This is not a matter of revelation. The fact that it is so is clearly revealed, but the precise manner is not. But should the latter remain forever inexplicable it can not affect the question of fact ; it can not invalidate the testimony of revelation on this subject. It is often difficult to find language to explain the deep things of God ; such is particularly the question under consideration. But although we may not be able to illustrate fully and precisely the manner in which the Spirit bears witness with ours, yet I apprehend we are warranted in saying that the witness of the Spirit is a sensible impression made upon the mind, producing involuntarily, on our part, a clear and entire conviction of the fact that our sins are pardoned and we are born of God,—such a conviction as precludes all doubt, banishes every fear, and affords a peace to the soul which “passeth understanding” and enables the possessor almost involuntarily to say, “Abba, Father.” He claims with the utmost confidence and assurance God as his Father. He now

adopts a language which he was afraid to employ in this sense before. He can now exclaim, in the language of Inspiration, "I know that I have passed from death unto life." And again, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." This is the language of the man who has the witness in himself. It is not with him a mere hope, it is a matter of certain knowledge; doubt is precluded, and a full assurance succeeds. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. Thus we learn that the Christian not only has the testimony of God's Spirit to his adoption, but this testimony is corroborated by that of our own spirits.

But we may inquire in the next place, What is the testimony of our spirits? The answer to this question we have already anticipated in our preceding remarks. We have said that it implies a consciousness of a change of heart, of a divine renovation of our natures. It is reasonable to suppose that such a radical change of heart as that implied in regeneration should be a matter of certain knowledge to those who experience it; that the man who is translated from a state of moral darkness

into the light and liberty of the children of God, from the power of Satan into the kingdom of the Son of God—his load of guilt and condemnation removed, his heart renovated, and his affections, desires, and tempers all renewed by grace, and now become spiritual and heavenly in their character—should be conscious of it. It is almost, if not altogether, impossible that any rational being should experience such a change in his nature without knowing it.

To render this the more apparent, let us notice briefly the condition of the penitent sinner under the awakening influences of the Spirit of God, contrasted with the happy state of the regenerated soul happy in the love of God, as delivered by the sacred writer. The Psalmist, in speaking of himself as having been in a horrible pit, in mire and clay, in the most deplorable and ruinous condition, where help could not be obtained, and where death seemed inevitable, said, “He has taken my feet from the miry clay, and has set me on the Rock of Ages, and he hath put a new song in my mouth.”

The doctrine contained in the portion of the sermon above inserted was very consoling to

the people of God. The Church grew strong under such preaching.

During his pastorate on this charge he was called upon to attend the funeral of William Harrison Holt, who was drowned in the Illinois River. He took for his text the thirteenth and fourteenth verses of the fourth chapter of First Thessalonians: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The occasion was one of great interest. He spoke, first, of the object of the hope as represented in the text—namely, the resurrection of the dead; second, who those are that sleep in Jesus? and, third, of the injunction of the text. He showed from many passages* that there will be a resurrection of the dead. On his third proposition he held out with glowing eloquence the hope of the Gospel.

During this year there was a camp-meeting at Cedar Point. In the absence of the

* Job xix, 25, 26, 27; Daniel xii, 2; John v, 28, 29; Acts xxiv, 15; Revelation xx, 12, 13, and the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

presiding elder, Mr. Phelps had charge of the meeting. He preached a convincing sermon on the mode of baptism; and some, who had been in trouble on the subject for years,* were baptized by affusion.† The meeting was a great success.

Mr. Phelps sold many books, and secured numerous subscribers for the *Western Christian Advocate*. The circuit was large, and he halted neither for bad weather nor high water. The people were much gratified at his return to the charge, and regretted the necessity for his removal at the close of the year.

The Conference convened at Jacksonville. Twenty-eight were received on trial. Milton Bourn and Thomas J. Kirkpatrick were of the number. The Church lost an able minister by expulsion. Let us not mention his name. He "sinned," perhaps, but was more "sinned against." The increase in membership was three thousand three hundred and sixteen.

Mr. Phelps went to Peoria Mission. He had but twenty-six members. There was no church. He preached in the Court-house. This was used by other denominations like-

* A. K. Tullis was presented for baptism at that time, now of Central Illinois Conference.

† D. Markley's letter to the writer.

wise. There was much unbelief in that region, and a Rev. Mr. Huntoon, from the East, a Unitarian, became very popular in Peoria. He made bold to assault the orthodox Churches, and drew immense crowds to hear him. Mr. Phelps felt it to be his duty to reply to these sermons, which he did with very marked ability and much effect. Mr. Huntoon replied, and Mr. Phelps responded. This warfare was kept up until Mr. Huntoon was completely vanquished, and left the field. This was probably Mr. Phelps's first theological encounter of importance. His success in this case called the attention of the Church to his remarkable endowments and adaptation to the then important work of defending the Church against such assailants as the above mentioned. Great good grew out of this thorough presentation of the orthodox doctrines, supported by the Scriptures. The people flocked to hear the true Gospel preachers. His congregations were quite large. He frequently lectured on week nights. At the close of this year he reported an increase of thirteen members.

Conference met at Alton. Bishop Soule did not reach the Conference, on account of the high waters, until the fourth day, and Peter

Cartwright was elected President.* Nathan Jewett, Joseph Kirkpatrick, and twenty others were received on trial. Michael S. Taylor had died, July 20th. He was presiding elder on the Quincy District at time of his decease. In all the relations of life he was irreproachable.† The membership now had reached 23,974; the increase for the year was 2,973. Twelve districts were manned as follows: Danville, Hooper Crews, P. E.; Mount Vernon, A. E. Phelps, P. E.; Lebanon, John Dew, P. E.; Alton, Charles Holliday, P. E.; Sangamon, Peter Cartwright, P. E.; Chicago, John Clark, P. E.; Milwaukee, Salmon Stebbins, P. E.; Galena, Bartholomew Weed, P. E.; Indian Mission District, Alfred Brunson, P. E.; Rock Island, Henry Summers, P. E.; Peoria, S. W. D. Chase, P. E.; Quincy, Peter Akers, P. E.

* Cartwright's Autobiography.

† Minutes.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

PRESIDING ELDERSHIP—MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT.

The Riot in Alton—The Excited State of the Public Mind—Bishop Soule—Presiding Eldership—Importance of the Office—Ella's Sickness—Their Removal to Mount Vernon District—Resided with the Pastor, Rev. John Shepard—List of His Preachers—His Preaching—Sermon on Salvation by Faith—Sermon on the Plan of Salvation.

ALTON had lately been fearfully aroused by the riotous proceedings which culminated in the death of Rev. E. P. Lovejoy. This tragic event agitated the whole country, and created sympathy for the cause of freedom in many hearts. Some of the most prominent members of the Illinois Conference were conservative, as was also the presiding bishop, Soule. Of course, all passed off quietly. Presiding elders were *then* chosen by the bishop's cabinet, and the very best material was used. Young men were often appointed to that office. Edward R. Ames was promoted to that position after serving in the pastorate nine years. Henry Summers was one of the "chosen" in *four years* after his admission on trial. Richard Haney in nine; A. E. Phelps

ten. Great exposure, long rides, protracted absence from home, and small compensation, were the inheritance of presiding elders in that day, and only "picked men" could meet the demands of the times. A. E. Phelps was now one of this noble band. Conference adjourned and he hastened to his home in Peoria.

While at conference little Ella was taken seriously sick, and was quite feeble when he returned home. They placed her on a pillow and started to the Mount Vernon District. Proceeding but a few hours each day they continued their journey. Ella improved rapidly, and in about ten days they reached Mount Vernon. They moved into the same house in which the pastor, John Shepard, resided. It was commodious, and afforded abundance of room for both families. Presiding Elder Phelps had as co-workers on Mount Vernon District, John Shepard, James H. Dickens, George C. Kimber, John W. M'Murty, Joshua Barnes, James Hadlee, James I. Richardson, Isaac G. Barr, John Fox, and preached at Mount Vernon, Nashville, Chester Mission, Jonesboro, Golconda, Shawneetown, Frankfort, Salem, and Maysville. He spent the most of his time away from home. He

wrote many sermons, but preached purely extempore. He preached a sermon on "Salvation by Faith," that awakened much interest. The reader may be curious to peruse this sermon, not as he preached it, but as he prepared it.

SALVATION BY FAITH.

"By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—EPH. ii, 8.

As the sense of the text seems to be complete of itself, I deem any formal introduction to the subject needless. The text contains three distinct propositions: I. That salvation is by grace, "By grace are ye saved." II. It is on the condition of faith, "Through faith." III. That faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Each of these we shall notice in the order in which they stand in the text.

First. "By grace are ye saved." Grace is generally defined to imply favor, free, unmerited favor; favor bestowed without claiming any equivalent from the recipient. That our salvation is by grace in this sense; that it was by the free, unmerited favor of God, by his infinite mercy and benevolence that man is saved, I presume but few will dispute. In the first place, man's redemption from under the curse

of the law afforded a most striking exhibition of God's unbounded mercy, an illustrious display of divine grace. Man had thrown off his allegiance to his sovereign, violated the divine law, and set at defiance the omnipotence of Jehovah. In this condition man had rendered himself a proper subject for heaven's displeasure, and a fit subject for eternal burnings. He fully deserved the sentence of the law he had violated. His sin was of a highly aggravated character. In this condition so far was God from being under an obligation to redeem him, that his truth, justice, holiness seemed to require the immediate execution of the sentence against him, which would have effected his eternal banishment from the divine presence. Nor could the perfections of Jehovah ever have been reconciled, it seems, with man's salvation, but through a mediator; by the sufferings and the death of his son. But while man was exposed to inevitable ruin, while the sword of justice was unsheathed, the uplifted thunders were ready to be let loose upon him and engulf him in endless misery, and law was pouring its dreadful curses on his head, the Son of God assumes human nature, steps in between man and offended justice, meets the uplifted thunders, sheathes the sword of venge-

ance in his own blood, and emancipates the human race. Oh, what a striking display of God's infinite mercy and grace does the death of Christ afford. Well may the poet sing,—

“Oh for this love let rocks and hills,
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Savior's praises speak.”

On this ground “God can be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.” Here mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Here all the perfections of God fully harmonize with man's salvation. That this work was of grace none will be so daring and reckless as to dispute. If the great atonement was a work of grace, of course all the blessings it secured to the faithful are equally of grace; the consequences flowing from it are of grace. If the greater blessings were of grace, the lesser ones included in it are of grace, of course. Therefore our present salvation from sin and eternal salvation from “wrath to come,” are of grace. At present we shall confine ourselves to the former—to *present salvation from sin*. It is this evidently to which our text has special and direct reference. The apostle does not say that you have been redeemed by grace. When speaking of the atonement or

the redeeming of man from under the curse of the law, the Inspired Writer never uses the language employed in the text. The language is then, "Ye are bought with a price." "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold," "but with the precious blood of Christ."

Second. The salvation mentioned in the text is attainable alone through faith. "By grace are ye saved, through faith." But our redemption from under the penalty of the Adamic law does not depend upon our faith or conditions of any kind on our part. In this all men are embraced, whether they have faith or not. Nor could it be eternal salvation to which the apostle alludes in this text, for this very obvious reason: The salvation that is here mentioned his brethren had already experienced. The address is in the present tense, "By grace are ye saved." They were already saved. From these considerations it is evident that the salvation mentioned here is present salvation from sin; the entire work of sanctification of our natures from first to last, from the first awakening of the sinner until the subject is cleansed from all sin by the blood of Christ. But as this is an age proverbial for improvement, for discoveries, the

advance of science, and march of mind, some adventurous master spirits, as perhaps they would wish to be styled, have ascertained that God has nothing to do in awakening the sinner. A Mr. A. Campbell, whose reputation has gone abroad as a man of talent and extensive research, denies the doctrine of a divine influence upon the sinner's heart, or, in other words, he affirms that the Spirit of God never strives with the impenitent sinner. I think his own words are, "In the absence of a single passage of Scripture on the subject, I deny that the Spirit of God ever does operate upon the sinner's heart until after baptism." He contends that baptism is regeneration itself. He admits that after men have repented and been baptized, which he is sometimes pleased to call the new birth or being born again, they receive the Holy Spirit, but not until then. That the Holy Spirit is given as a comforter only to the regenerate or to the children of God, I admit. To such only is he given as a witness, to testify to their adoption and shed upon them divine consolation and spiritual enjoyment; but to affirm that the Spirit of God has nothing to do in awakening the conscience of the sinner, in convicting him of sin, and in arousing him to a sense of his guilt,

and his lost condition is most evidently contradicted by the Scriptures throughout; and is opposed to the analogy of the Christian faith, as I shall at a proper time show. A twin sister to this doctrine, which we now oppose, is that which asserts man's natural ability to convert himself. This doctrine, which claims to be Calvinism remodeled or newly modified, is in truth the offspring of Pelagianism. It excludes divine agency altogether, or at least in the awakening and conversion of the sinner, and arrays his natural abilities, with energy and moral power, as sufficient for self-conversion. This doctrine, if we mistake not, admits a divine agency in the conversion of the sinner so far as the will is concerned, and no further. It admits that the Spirit of God may influence the will, gives the sinner the disposition to submit to God, but regeneration or conversion is the sinner's own work. This theory, though it may be advocated by men who lay high claims to literary attainments, to intellectual acumen, and Biblical knowledge, is most evidently unscriptural and unphilosophical. Both this theory and that of Mr. Campbell, above noticed, are based upon a mistaken view of human nature—of the moral condition of mankind. They both indi-

rectly deny the depravity of human nature, the moral defection of the human heart. For if it be admitted that "every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only evil continually," that "from the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, which have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment," as represented in the strong language of the prophet—if we admit that the apostle drew a true picture of human nature in the seventh chapter to the Romans, where he says, "For I am carnal, sold under sin;" "When I would do good evil is present with me;" "I find there a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members"—it follows that the theories under consideration are as unphilosophical as unscriptural. If we admit, as the Scriptures clearly represent, that by nature man is under the dominion of sin, under the control and influence of moral depravity, it is difficult to conceive how man, by his own efforts, can rise superior to that influence, repent of his sins, reform his life, change his own heart, and conform to the requirements of the Gospel.

Nothing can be more paradoxical; nothing more absurd. Therefore, these are directly incompatible with the moral depravity of human nature. They can never be reconciled by any mode of reasoning, by any method of explanation whatever. If human nature be depraved the doctrine of self-conversion must be untrue. Mr. Campbell denies that the Spirit of God ever operates upon the sinner's heart. If this be the case, and human nature be as much under the influence of moral depravity as the Scriptures represent, the salvation of the sinner will be impossible, and his damnation inevitable in the very nature of things. In that case, though I speak it with reverence, God himself would be to blame for the sinner's damnation in withholding from him that assistance which was absolutely essential to his salvation; for having brought him into existence under circumstances which rendered it impossible for him to repent and obey the Gospel without divine aid, and then denying him that aid. This system not only indirectly charges God with the impenitence of the sinner; but, if true, would render the salvation of any individual impossible, and the damnation of all absolutely certain. It is hard to conceive how a dead man can raise himself to life. Nothing

can be more absurd than such a supposition. It would suppose a man to act without an existence, to exert powers he did not possess. It is no less absurd to talk about a sinner, who is represented in Scripture as in a state of moral death, dead in trespasses and in sins, introducing himself into a state of spiritual life. The Scriptures frequently represent the impenitent sinner as spiritually dead. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,"—is the language of the Scriptures on the subject. And therefore, if this be his condition, he must necessarily remain in a state of moral death, under the dominion of sin and moral depravity, unless aroused or quickened by some foreign influence, by some moral energy or power independent of his own. And consequently, if divine influence be withheld, the sinner's damnation is inevitable, and heaven is placed forever beyond his reach. This conclusion is inevitable. Nor will it avail any thing to say that divine influence may be exerted upon the will. It is not merely necessary that the will be quickened; but it is equally necessary that

the moral powers, that the whole moral nature of man, be quickened.

But we not only arrive at the conclusion that man of himself can do nothing in the work of his salvation, but the Scriptures directly warrant the conclusion. At present we shall only quote a few passages on this subject. "Without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." This, it is true, was addressed to the disciple who had experienced a change of heart, but this does not weaken its force when applied to the sinner; for, if Christians can do nothing without Christ, can we expect that the unregenerate can do any thing acceptable to God without divine aid? Again, says Christ, "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The apostle says, "The will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." Again, in his epistle to the Corinthians he says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." Here the apostle, though renewed by grace and brought into the liberty of the children of God, intimates that he was not able by his own strength to originate a good thought, but acknowledged himself indebted to divine grace

even for this power. Without multiplying quotations farther, from the passages already adduced it is clear that without divine assistance no man can repent and obey the Gospel, much less regenerate his own nature.

But we will now proceed to a more direct examination of Scripture in proof of the doctrine of divine influence, or of the operations of the Spirit upon the sinner's heart. It has been affirmed by the author above mentioned that the Scriptures afford no proof that the Spirit of God ever operates upon the heart of any man until he has repented and been baptized. Let the Word of God decide this question. Even before the Flood it was said by God himself, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Here the word "man" is evidently used in its most enlarged or general acceptation to include the whole human family. Therefore, this passage must obviously presuppose that previous to that time the Spirit of God had striven with all men; but now the mass had become so incorrigibly wicked, and their depravity and corruption had become so incurable, that he intended to withdraw the influence of his Spirit from them, and consign them to destruction. And if this passage stood alone on this subject it would be suffi-

cient to sustain the doctrine that it has at least once been the economy of God to strive by his Spirit with impenitent sinners, and such too as finally rejected the counsel of God against themselves. When Stephen, the first martyr, was put upon his trial for his life, he addressed the Jewish Sanhedrim in the following language: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. As your fathers did, so do you." Here St. Stephen addressed those very individuals who had imbued their hands in his blood and wreaked their vengeance on the head of the blessed Savior, and were now endeavoring to banish the Gospel from the world; and these very characters, Stephen affirms, had always resisted the Holy Ghost. Of course they must have felt from time to time his influence and operations. But that influence they had as often resisted. Not only were they themselves the subjects of divine influence, but their impenitent fathers were ever before them: "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. As your fathers did, so do you." Thus it seems that their ancestors had been distinguished for their resistance of the Holy Ghost. This passage, therefore, not only proves that the Holy Ghost strove with all

impenitent sinners in the days of the apostles, but that it had been the order of God under the former dispensation. It was said by St. John, in speaking of Christ, that he was the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. This was not done by his personal ministry, nor has it been done by the preaching of the Gospel; it then follows that it must be effected by the illuminations of his Spirit. The Apostle Paul says, "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Again, says the same apostle, "But this manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." I shall at present quote but one more passage on this subject, and that was spoken by Jesus Christ himself. "It is expedient for you," "that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you; and when he is come he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment." Here his mission was not to the Church, but to the world. "He shall reprove the world," in contradistinction from the Church. I admit that he is given to the

Church as a Comforter, but he is sent to the world as a reprover or convincer of sin. This passage itself is conclusive on this subject; it needs no corroborating evidence. It is clear from this that the Holy Spirit is sent forth to convince the sinner of sin, to awaken him to a sense of his guilt.

From the Scriptures already adduced it is apparent that the work of salvation is commenced, carried on, and completed by grace. "By grace are ye saved;" not only in part, but in full. But although the Holy Spirit strives with all men, exerts his awakening and enlightening influence upon the heart of every impenitent sinner, yet that influence is not irresistible; it does not control man's agency, but rather enables him to exercise his agency, which before was measurably under the control of moral evil, and also to employ aright his moral energies and powers, which had been weakened and enervated by sin. This is the difference between our Calvinistic brethren and ourselves. They maintain that this influence is irresistible. It constitutes what they style the effectual call, which completely controls the agency of the sinner and brings him to submit to God. We maintain that it may be resisted and is resisted by every incorrigible sinner.

We read of "quenching the Spirit," of "resisting the Holy Ghost," of some who "reject the counsel of God against themselves." The sinner, we maintain, may yield to the influence of the Holy Spirit, and thereby secure his salvation; or he may resist, and seal forever his damnation.

On a subsequent occasion he preached a sermon on the same subject, from the same text, in opposition to the new doctrines of Rev. A. Campbell, and the New Light Holders. Although some portions of it were much like his former sermon, it includes an extended argument in defense of the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of the unconverted, and may be useful to those who desire to combat these dangerous doctrines, so popular at that time, and still dominant in some localities. His discourse is given in the simple, unfinished style in which it was used on the occasion.

A SERMON ON THE PLAN OF SALVATION.

"By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

The salvation mentioned in the text is attainable through faith; but our redemp-

tion from under the curse of the law does not depend in any sense on the faith of the subject. All have been redeemed, without any reference to their faith or unbelief. In this sense "Christ is the Savior of all men." But as the salvation named in the text is suspended to us on the condition of faith, it is evident that it is present salvation, salvation from sins, that salvation which the Christian experiences in this life. This the apostle asserts is by grace; "by grace are ye saved." Grace, in its common acceptation, implies favor—free, unmerited favor—favor bestowed without claiming any equivalent of the recipient. But it also implies that sanctification of our nature which qualifies us for heaven, that work of God in the soul which restores us to the divine image and fits us for eternal life. Thus from the text it is evident that our present salvation is by grace; that is, it is God that commences, that carries on and completes the work in the heart, from the first convictions of sin, from the first awakening of the sinner, till it ends to the glory of God. This work is of grace, not in part merely, but in full. There are those of modern times, who have some claims to literary and theological attainments, that assert the doctrine of man's natural abilities to con-

vert himself. There is a system or form of Calvinism known by the name of New Divinity, or New School Divinity, the offspring of this age of improvement and invention, which altogether excludes divine agency from the work of our salvation, except so far as the will is concerned. This system of doctrine asserts that man possesses the power of self-conversion, except the will or dispensation, and that all the assistance he needs in the accomplishment of this work is to influence the will to do right.

Nearly related to this is the doctrine of Mr. A. Campbell, who denies the doctrine of divine influence, and maintains that man is capable of repenting, believing, and obeying the divine agency. He believes that the Spirit of God is given to the Christian after baptism, or perhaps in the act of immersion, but not before; and then he is not given to aid him in working out his salvation, but simply as a Comforter and a Witness, to witness his adoption. Thus it seems Mr. Campbell excludes divine agency altogether from the work of our salvation; for even the new birth itself, according to his doctrine, is accomplished by the agency of water,—the Christian is regenerated by water.

Hence, while one of these systems just no-

ticed excludes the influences of the Spirit of God and the work of grace from the sinner's heart, except merely to influence the will, the other excludes it altogether, and ascribes all the work of salvation to man himself. Thus man may claim the theory of saving himself from sin and fitting himself for heaven. But with whatever abilities these systems of theology, so called, may be advocated, and however they may be embellished by the ornaments of science and ingenuity, they most certainly present a striking contrariety to the doctrine of Scripture. In the first place, the doctrines we now oppose are at variance with the moral depravity of human nature; for if it be true that man is capable of repenting, believing, and meeting the claims of the divine grace without divine assistance, it can not be true that his mental powers have been deranged by sin, and his whole nature involved in moral depravity. But, on the other hand, if the picture drawn by the pencil of inspiration, of the moral depravity of the human heart be correct; if it be true "that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is evil and that continually;" if it be true that "the whole heart is sick, the whole heart is faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it,

but bruises and wounds and putrefying sores, which have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment;" if it be true that the natural man "is carnal, sold under sin;" if it follows that man has no power to take the first step in the work of his salvation without divine assistance; if human nature, while thus unrewarded, be under the influence of moral depravity, man possesses no more power to work out his salvation without divine assistance than he did to create himself.

This is not mere speculation; it is warranted by the Word of God. "We are not sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." Here the apostle asserts his inability to think a good thought without divine assistance. "Without me," says the blessed Savior, "you can do nothing." "How to perform that which is good, I find not," says Paul. "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him," is the assertion of Christ. Thus it is clear, from the Scripture quoted, that man is dependent upon divine grace for power to make the very first efforts in the work of his salvation. It therefore follows that if such assistance is denied the sinner, his salvation is impossible and his

damnation inevitable. Although the damnation of all men would be certain on this ground, yet no man would have any agency in affecting his own damnation, but it would be the necessary result of inherent depravity of his nature. How a man literally dead could resurrect himself is exceedingly hard to conceive. Nothing could be more absurd than such a supposition. It involves the absurdity of supposing a man to act before he had an existence. It is no less absurd to suppose that a man morally or spiritually dead could work himself into a state of spiritual life. The Scripture represents man while in a state of nature as dead in sin, in a state of moral death. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins." "Even when we were dead in sin, hath he quickened us together with Christ."

If, then, men are spiritually dead while in a state of nature, there must be some influence exerted upon them capable of quickening or imparting life before they can make the first exertion in coming to God. This work is ascribed directly to God in the Scriptures just quoted, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Again, "Even when we were dead in sin, hath he quickened us together with Christ."

The manner in which sinners who are dead in sins are aroused from that state of moral death, and introduced into a state of spiritual life, is more fully illustrated in Ezekiel's vision of dry bones. He was conducted into a valley of dry bones, and was required to prophesy unto them; and while he prophesied the breath of the Lord came upon them and they lived. These dry bones represented the house of Israel in the first place, and, secondly, I apprehend, the moral condition of the Gentile world; prophecy represents the preaching of the Gospel; and the breath of the Lord that energy of the divine Spirit which attends the ministration of truth to the heart. Thus the Gospel is the instrument or the preaching of the Gospel, but the Spirit of God is the agent in awakening and converting the sinner. This is the doctrine uniformly taught in the Scriptures of the New Testament, "Our Gospel came not to you in word only," says the apostle, "but in power and demonstration of the Spirit." "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

But we will now notice some Scriptures which show directly that the Spirit of God does strive with impenitent sinners: "My

Spirit," says God, "shall not always strive with man." The term man is here used in its most enlarged sense, to include the whole family of man; hence this passage contains evidence direct, that God's Spirit did strive with all previous to that time, but on account of their excessive wickedness, the violent resistance they had offered to his Holy Spirit, he would be withdrawn; and in that very act their damnation would be sealed. St. Stephen, in addressing the Jewish council, says: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." This passage was addressed to those Jews who had bathed their hands in the blood of Christ, and would at that time, if they could, with one fell stroke have struck the religion of Christ out of existence, crushed the infant Church, and banished the Christian name from the earth forever. These same impenitent Jews who were then clamoring for the blood of Stephen resisted the Holy Ghost; of course they must have been the subjects of his influence. But their impenitent fathers before them were also the subjects of his influence. "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so

do ye." Thus it is clear from this passage that the Holy Spirit uniformly strove with men, under the Jewish as well as the Christian dispensation. John says, in speaking of Christ, "He is the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This Christ did not do by his personal ministrations, nor by the ministry of the apostles, for they did not preach the Gospel to half the men that were in the world; it therefore follows that it would only be done by the secret influence of his Spirit exerted upon the heart. Our Lord explains to us how this is done; says he, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you. And when he is come he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment." The gift of the Holy Ghost, as promised in this passage, contemplates a two-fold object: First, to comfort the Church, secondly, to reprove the world. His mission was not restricted to the Church, but the world, in contradistinction to the Church, was to be the scene of his operation. To the Church he was given as a comforter, but to the world he

was sent as a reprover of sin. This passage will afford a comment upon the passage in John above quoted. There Christ is said to enlighten every man that cometh into the world, to convince men of sin. If this passage, therefore, stood alone on this subject, it would be sufficient to support the doctrine of a divine influence on the sinner's heart. Other passages, however, might be adduced if necessary, but sufficient, we conceive, have been quoted. It is said of Lydia that the Lord "opened her heart, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul." This was not done by the preaching of the Gospel, but it was preparatory for the reception of the Gospel. "He opened her heart that she attended to the things spoken by Paul;" of course God exerted an influence upon her heart altogether separate and distinct from the Gospel.

We are required to pray for all men and for the success of the Gospel among men. "I exhort, therefore, that first of all that supplication, prayers, intercessions, and of giving of thanks be made for all men," etc. Again says the apostle, "Pray for me that the Word of God may have free course and be glorified."

If we are to pray for sinners it evidently supposes that God has something to do in bringing about their salvation, and in inducing repentance in them, otherwise it would be folly and absurd to pray for them. And, again, why should we pray for the success of the Gospel if God's Spirit has nothing to do with sinners? Our obligation to pray for sinners, and that the Word of God may have free course and be glorified, evidently supposes that the Spirit of God is the efficient and only agent in the awakening and salvation of the sinner and in the success of the Gospel. A Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but the increase is from God. Thus from the Scriptures is adduced that the work of our salvation is commenced, carried on, and completed by grace. The top stone of our salvation will be brought forth at last with shoutings, Grace, grace unto it. By grace are ye saved. Though this work is of grace from beginning to end, from first to last, our own agency is by no means excluded. Such is the depravity of human nature that man is incapable of exercising his agency in practicing virtue without divine assistance; but the grace of God does not control, but only assists man's agency. By divine grace he is enabled to exercise it in

the discharge of religious duty and in working out his salvation. The apostle exhorts his brethren to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that works within you to will and to do."

CHAPTER FIFTH.

MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT CONTINUED.

Sermon on the Mission of Paul to the Gentiles—Four Years on the District—His Residence in Mount Vernon—His Habits of Study—Greek and Hebrew—Habits at Home—Incident at Family Prayer—G. J. Accompanies him to Quarterly-meeting—Incident—Prolific Cow—Mischievous Boys at Mount Vernon—Mock Worship in a Saloon—Reproof by Elder Phelps—The Young Man's Tragic End—The Death of Little Ella—Beautiful Tribute to her Memory—Poem on Ella's Death by Thomas Johnson—Birth of Mary Frances—Letter to his Father-in-law—Revival in Mount Vernon—Camp-meeting—Dreadful Thunder-storm—John Maxey—Number of Members in the Conference—Leading Ministers of the Rock River Conference—Death Roll—Paxton Cummings—Spencer Hunter—William Cundiff—Peter Borein—George Smith—John Dew—Joshua Barnes—David B. Carter—John E. French—Samuel H. Thompson—Interesting Letter to his Wife—Sermon on the Call and Support of the Ministry.

THE Apostle Paul and his mission to the Gentiles is a fruitful subject of study. Mr. Phelps was evidently a great admirer of Paul. His sermon, here inserted, will increase our admiration of the great Apostle to the Gentiles. Although not written for the press, it will well repay a careful perusal.

A SERMON ON THE MISSION OF PAUL TO THE GENTILES.

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”—EPHESIANS III, 8.

Here the apostle is speaking of the very important and highly responsible trust which God had committed to him; namely, that of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles.* “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Although the apostle has occasion here to speak of himself as God’s ambassador, as the honored instrument in the hand of God in disclosing to the benighted Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, yet with what unfeigned modesty he speaks of himself! how deeply does his language mark the humility of his heart! He does it in such a manner as not to detract in the least from the grace or glory of God; he desires not to fix their eyes upon the instrument, but upon the author of their salvation. He wishes not to attract their admiration himself, but to excite their gratitude to God, who was the source of all their blessings. “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints.” How great must have been the self-

abasement, and the sense of his own unworthiness that dictated the language of the text. Whatever excellences he might have possessed, whatever may have been his abilities or qualifications for ministerial labor and usefulness, they seem all to have been forgotten under a sense of the infinite perfection and goodness of God. Self seems to have been last. His object was to extol the grace of God in the salvation of the heathen; and therefore he keeps himself, as the instrument, as much as possible behind the curtain. This, too, was the language of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who, in point of literary attainments, intellectual endowments, the amount and success of his labors, the sufferings, dangers, and perils he underwent for the sake of Christ, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, had no equal in the ministerial works in the Church of Christ. No man wielded a greater religious influence than did St. Paul. No man achieved the same success in the great work of evangelizing the world. No man could vindicate and defend with so much ability the Gospel of Christ against its enemies as he. Even Roman statesmen, who were no friends to the Christian religion, highly complimented his abilities. Such was the force and power

of his reasoning, and such the holy unction that attended his ministry, that under St. Paul Felix trembled; and Agrippa on his throne, under its overwhelming influence, exclaimed, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." And Festus, feeling the powerful effects of the Word preached by such a man, cried out, abruptly, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning hath made thee mad." But notwithstanding his exalted abilities, and what he had already accomplished under the blessing of God, and what he was capable of doing under divine influence, when he views himself in the relation of an ambassador to God, commissioned to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to a ruined world, he is humbled in the dust at the feet of Christ; he feels himself lighter than the dust in the balances. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints."

Possibly the early history of the apostle, the opposition and enmity he had evinced toward the Gospel, may have tended to increase his humility in subsequent life. He had been distinguished in his early life for his course of violent persecution against the Christian religion. He breathed forth death and slaughter against Christians wherever he went. To use his own language, "he was a blasphemer,"

and a "persecutor," and "injurious." In short, a blind zeal for the tradition of the fathers, a fiery, persecuting spirit, pride, ambition, and vanity, had formed the prominent traits of his character before his conversion to Christianity. Therefore a recollection of his former character, his persecution of the saints of God, and his opposition to the Christian faith, may have tended to render him more humble after he was admitted into fellowship with the Son of God.

But evidently the feeling expressed here by the apostle is possessed more or less by every genuine Christian. Wherever the love of God predominates in the heart it supplants vanity, pride, and self-confidence, and inspires humility and meekness. Religion gives us proper views of ourselves, of the depravity of our hearts, and of our personal demerit, and sinks us in the dust at the feet of Christ. The sentiment expressed here by the apostle, I apprehend, is felt more or less in a peculiar sense by every faithful minister of the Gospel. The minister who feels the worth of souls as he should, the weight of his charge, and the responsibilities it involves, must feel his own incompetency to the work, and consequently be humbled under a sense of the same. "That

I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The apostle's mission was specially or particularly to the Gentiles. His call was not so much to labor among the Jews as to plant the standard of the cross in heathen lands, to penetrate into the regions of darkness and moral night, and light up the sacred torch, to guide the bewildered heathen to the Zion of the Lord. When he was first called to be an apostle the field of his labor and the nature of his mission were pointed out by Christ himself. "Depart," says Christ, "for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." And again, "I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles." He was sent to the uncircumcision as Peter was to the circumcision. When writing to the Galatians the apostle observes, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen." In his epistle to the Romans he says: "For I speak to the Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."

Hence we see him, instead of hunting up the lost sheep of the house of Israel, instead of turning his attention to the seed of Abraham,

directing his course into Greece. Under his ministerial labor, moral darkness recedes before the light of divine truth, altars and temples erected to the worship of idols and pagan deities are overthrown, the fire of human victims is extinguished, and the religion of the Bible succeeds to idolatry and pagan superstition. Satan falls as lightning from heaven, and the Gospel proves the power of God unto the salvation of thousands that were before in darkness. No sooner did the apostle organize Churches, and get them properly disciplined, than he committed them to the care and oversight of elders, whom he ordained for this purpose, and continued himself to push forward the conquest of the Cross to other heathen lands. And such was his untiring zeal, and indefatigable diligence in the great work of evangelizing the heathen, that not only did Asia Minor and the different parts of Greece receive the Gospel by his labors, but almost the whole Roman Empire felt its happy influence mainly through his instrumentality. Before his death there were Christians in Cæsar's household, in the family of Nero, that bloody persecutor, that demon incarnate, who waged the most merciless warfare against those who espoused the Christian religion. Well might

St. Paul be styled the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

“That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Here the apostle seems to allude to the unfathomable depths of divine mercy and grace, as connected with the scheme and work of human redemption, the various footsteps of God in the salvation of fallen and guilty man, the plans he had devised, the dispensations he had brought about and providences he had combined, to prepare, mature, and bring to effect his gracious design in the salvation of a ruined world by Jesus Christ. The plan had been maturing for several successive centuries, from the time the promise of a Savior was made to Adam, until the whole was consummated in the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There are displays of wisdom, mercy, and benevolence in the work of human redemption which I apprehend no finite mind can fully comprehend, and which are calculated at once to awaken the astonishment and excite the admiration of men and angels, of earth and of heaven. The plan of salvation, and that system of religious truth disclosed in the Gospel, may be considered unsearchable, first, because they have never been discovered by

human reason alone, by the powers of man unaided by revelation. These are matters far beyond the reach of the human intellect, till they are made known by revelation. Hence, says the apostle, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." Here the apostle teaches us that what no human eye had seen, ear heard, or heart or mind conceived, had been revealed to us by his Holy Spirit. The infinite grace and mercy of God to man, the great work of redemption, and the magnitude of the blessings secured to the faithful by the death of Christ, awakened the attention and excited the admiration of winged seraphs around the divine throne. They are represented as bending over these matters with the utmost interest, bringing all their noble powers and superior energies of mind to endeavor to solve the sublime mysteries of godliness, and comprehend the system of divine mercy to man. "Angels desire to look into these things," is the language of the inspired writer. Though angels are not personally concerned in this matter, yet the salvation of man affords such an illustration of the perfections of

Jehovah, such an illustrious display of the justice, truth, holiness, love, mercy, and benevolence of God as must interest all his intelligent creatures.

There are, no doubt, depths of divine mercy and riches of grace which no finite mind can fully explore in this life. There is a fullness in God, there are blessings connected with the Gospel, which the most distinguished and highly privileged saint can never fully experience in this state of existence. The more the Christian's experience becomes matured, the greater his attainments in grace, the higher his enjoyments, and the more profound his knowledge of God, the greater the blessings he will still see in his advance. Even St. Paul himself, while under plenary inspiration, experienced this. The more he labored, the more he wrote and preached, the more exalted and expanded were his views, because of the mercy and benevolence of God.

If we view his epistles in their chronological order, it will be apparent that, the longer he lived, the more he labored, and the more he contemplated the subject of human salvation, the clearer and more distinct his views became of the riches of divine grace. We hear him, in this same chapter now before us,

from his bended knees praying for his brethren at Ephesus, that they might "receive Christ in their hearts by faith, that they might be rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God." Perhaps there was never a prayer put up by man that comprehended so much as this, and that afforded such exalted views of the plenitude of divine grace, of the high privileges of the Christian and the distinguished favors and blessings which he may enjoy in this life. And had the apostle continued to live and write and preach until now, it is not probable that he would have exhausted his subject, he would not probably have been able to set forth all the unsearchable riches of Christ. No wonder, therefore, that the apostle, in contemplating this on other occasions, should exclaim impassionately, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways are past finding out."

The apostle, at the close of his prayer for his Ephesian brethren, observes, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly

above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us." However enlarged and comprehensive our petitions may be, however great the blessing may be for which we pray, God is able to bestow blessings far surpassing those which we ask. And when we can no longer find language to clothe our petitions, when we can no longer find words sufficiently comprehensive to express our desires, then let thought extend to its utmost limits, let conception extend so far as it may, however the mind may be trained to contemplation, to close and intense thought, God is able and willing to bestow blessings far exceeding the utmost reach of such conception. And I apprehend that it is not a wild or unreasonable conjecture to suppose that much will remain for eternity itself to disclose to glorified saints. However much the saint may enjoy in this life, whatever may be his attainments in grace, to whatever depths he may sink in perfect love, and to whatever heights he may rise in the knowledge and enjoyments of God, the "half can not be told" to him in this state of existence. Nor can it be expected that on his arrival in heaven he can at once scan all the scenes of happiness and felicity which he is to explore in the lapse

of endless duration. Thousands of ages may have passed away, and yet there will be an infinite fullness in Christ, and the entire extent of divine mercy and grace will still be untold to the spirits of just men made perfect. Well may the apostle, therefore, style the riches of Christ "unsearchable." Unsearchable they are, unsearchable they will remain in time, and unsearchable they will be through eternity itself.

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery." The principal object of his mission to the Gentiles is here set forth, that "all men might see what was the fellowship of the mystery." During the lapse of several successive centuries the Jews remained the peculiar people of God; they alone were embraced in the visible covenant of grace, they enjoyed exclusively the privileges of the Church, they alone were favored with the oracles of God. And even at the dawn of the Gospel dispensation, before it was fully opened up, when Christ commissioned the seventy disciples to proclaim the approach of the kingdom of God, they were restricted to the house of Israel in their labors. "Go ye not in the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go

rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," were the words of Christ. But when the Gospel dispensation was fully opened up, after the great atonement was made and the Savior risen from the tomb, when he came to institute a living ministry to be perpetuated through all successive ages to the end of time, he enlarges their fields of labor to embrace the world. He extends their commission to every inhabitant of earth. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," was the command of Heaven. The apostles were sent forth to disciple the nations of the earth. "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," was the language of Christ.

He remained on this district four years. He built a house of his own in Mount Vernon, then a town of one thousand inhabitants. He sold many books within the bounds of his district, and labored to induce the people to read the Church papers. He was a friend to education, and an enthusiastic student himself. He would retire at ten oclock P. M., *at home* or abroad, and arise at four o'clock A. M., and pursue his studies. Among strangers he faith-

fully observed this rule. He took up the study of Greek and Hebrew, and by continued perseverance became well versed in the original languages of the Bible. At home he was playful and, when well, very cheerful.

Once while engaged at family devotions, as he arose to sing—a grand old custom of the fathers—George, then quite a lad, arose, turned his chair, and resting his knee on the bottom and his elbow on the back, was enjoying the singing, keeping time in true primitive style by the motion of his body, when he lost his balance and fell full length on the floor. This occurred just as his father was kneeling. Mr. Phelps controlled his feelings, but not without an effort and some embarrassment.

George J. Barrett went with him to attend a quarterly meeting. On their way they tarried for refreshments; and at the conclusion of the repast proposed a season of prayer. They knelt, and Mr. Phelps said, "Brother Barrett, pray with us." G. J. B. replied, "Brother Phelps, pray." Mr. Phelps responded firmly, as his superior officer, "*Brother B., pray.*" He quickly responded, "*No, brother Phelps, you pray.*" The third time Mr. Phelps said, "Brother B., lead in prayer;" and the third time he responded, "*Brother Phelps, lead*

in prayer!" Brother Phelps lead the devotions; then he arose and told the young minister he had better go back to his charge and attend to his own work. Brother B. said he was going over to enjoy the quarterly meeting, not to work.

One of his cows—he kept three—raised twin calves, and Mrs. Phelps named one "Jacob" and the other "Esau." Mr. Phelps greatly enjoyed telling that "Jacob would always rob Esau!" The boys in Mount Vernon were very mischievous. On one Christmas morning the whole family were aroused by the crowing of chickens and quacking of geese; the confusion was unendurable. The boys had piled about the doorway boxes full of chickens and geese.

At another time some mischievous fellows took his carriage apart and placed it upon the top of his barn. Mr. Phelps went over to the store where one of the principals in the mischief was supposed to be, and said to him, "I do not care how many times you put my buggy upon my barn if you only take it down again." How it got down was not a matter of general notoriety, but that it was very quickly and slyly restored to its old place was especially noted by the family and near neighbors.

One young man attempted to hold mock worship in a saloon, and actually proceeded to administer the sacrament in regular form to his drinking companions. Elder Phelps being informed of his wicked mock services, said to him, "Brother Tommy, I am afraid you will come to some bad end." Sometime after this young man cut his own throat with a razor in a carpenter-shop.

Little Ella sickened, and after a brief illness died on April 7, 1840. It was a very affecting occasion; Ella was almost idolized by the whole family, especially by Mr. Phelps. He did not reach home until after her death, but was in season to look for the last time upon her lovely form. A writer in the *Central Advocate*, many years after little Ella's death, thus described the mournful event:

" 'I am but young, yet I have seen
The ruin wrought where death has been.'

"Some twenty years have inscribed their changes on the scroll of time, since I was first called to visit the house of mourning, the chamber of death. Sad, yet holy, was the scene. The grim angel had, in a moment, clipped the unseen thread that bound the spirit of little ELLA to these sinful shores; and there she lay in all the beautiful bloom of youth, just as she was wont to lie down at night and sleep, when weary of her daily sports. Her eyes, once sparkling with the light of precious intelligence, were closed

in death's long sleep. Her little hands were crossed upon her breast. Her snow-white feet, which, but the day before bounded so lightly along the streets, lay side by side, composed in death. An aged herald of the cross, who has lately gone to rest, after singing and praying, read words of consolation from the blessed Bible, then told us of the heavenly world and the joy of meeting our loved ones where—

“Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.”

“He spoke of death and the resurrection, and the glory that should follow. The friends of the departed then passed around to look their last upon the lifeless form before them. Tears were shed and sobs and sighs came forth from agonizing hearts. The mother, in the anguish of her soul, significantly waved her hand as she gazed for the last time upon her child, as if to say, ‘Gone! gone! forever gone!’ All that remained of lovely ELLA was then consigned to the cold and narrow limits of the grave, there to rest till the trumpet of God shall wake the nations under ground.

“In casting my eyes over the lights and shades of the dreary past there is a peculiar, beautiful, and immaculate hañ encircling that scene of my early life. Ella's father was an itinerant Methodist preacher, and shortly after her death he removed to a distant part of the State; but left a memorial to indicate the resting-place of his child. This has since been destroyed. As often as I visit old Union burying-ground, I instinctively, yet as vainly, look for some traces of that memorial. But no monument, how-

ever plain, is left to tell to passers by that such a cherub ever lived. It is sufficient though, for us to know that she lies concealed from the storms that blow over the living so rudely.

“The father has since gone to join his joyous ELLA in the glory land. Doubtless, though lost to earth, yet, as she ranges the unsullied fields of bliss amid the angelic choir on high, God smiles upon the sinless spirit of AGNES ELEANOR PHELPS.”

Long after the death of little Ella, Thomas Johnson sent the parents a few verses of poetry with reference to their affliction. Such little tokens, at such a time, are very soothing. The reader will be pleased to peruse a few of these verses.

“As some fair bud, some opening flower,
Just verging into blooming life,
Is torn by some rude tempest power,
And darkened 'mid elemental strife,

Oh why should such a tender form
Be driven thus to swift decay?
Why should that heart no more be warm,
And why that pulse forget to play?

Why thus has fled the vital breath
And ceased to burn the inward flame?
Why should those lips grow pale in death
Which scarce could lisp her Maker's name?

But cease, fond parents, cease to mourn,
Though heavy falls the judgment rod,
On seraph's wings your child is borne,
To dwell forever with its God.

Let weeping nature then be still,
 And tears of anguish cease to flow,
 Bow meekly to your Maker's will,
 'Twas He that dealt the fatal blow.

He saw that in one fleeting hour
 Enough of pain and woe was given,
 And loving well your opening flower,
 He took it back to bloom in heaven."

On September 14, 1840, Mary Frances Phelps was born. A letter to his father-in-law states that he was absent at the time; that she reminds him of little Ella, whom they had made too much of an idol. A great revival was in progress at Mount Vernon; the house was crowded each night, already there had been about forty conversions.

At one of his quarterly meetings held the next year Elder Phelps baptized many children; he then presented his own little Mary Frances, and she was baptized by James Dickens.* The meeting was held in a barn. Oh, those quarterly meetings in barns were times of power, never to be forgotten! Camp-meetings were held each year on his district with great success. At one of these meetings a fearful storm raged for hours. Many took refuge in a school-house near by; and whilst peal after peal of deafening thunder drowned the

* August, 1841.

voices of the worshipers, John Maxey broke out in tremulous tones :

“He comes, he comes, the Judge severe.”

Trembling seized every listener. Some shouted, some cried for mercy, and many were “born of God” there that night.

At the General Conference in Baltimore, 1840, Rock River Conference was set off, with 6,585 members.* Illinois Conference reported at its next session 25,122 members. In 1839 Henry Summers had traveled the entire State of Iowa as a district. He fell into the Rock River Conference; also Hooper Crews, J. T. Mitchell, John Sinclair, John Clark, Philo Judson, Barton Cartwright, T. M. Kirkpatrick, Thomas S. Hitt, Nathan Jewett, J. L. Kirkpatrick, B. T. Kavanaugh, S. H. Stocking, S. P. Keyes, Milton Bourn, and many others—seventy-five in all.

During the quadrennial, Paxton Cummings had died, August 21, 1839, “in hope of eternal life.” He was a remarkable example of perfect love and entire sanctification.† James Harsha died on the 20th of March, 1839, in full prospect of a blissful immortality. Spencer

* So says Cartwright's Autobiography. The Minutes report 6,593.

† See Obituary, General Minutes, vol. 3, page 53.

Hunter died, October 18, 1838, shouting, "Victory!" The time of William Cundiff's decease is not given. He professed sanctification at an early age. His sight failed him before he departed, but by faith he saw a world of joy awaiting him. Peter Borein died at the early age of twenty-nine, a martyr to hard work. His labors in Chicago can not be forgotten. As a speaker he held the highest rank. His death was peaceful. Peace to his ashes. George Smith traveled two years, was ordained, and went to his new work in Princeton; sickened, and died in peace. John Dew died December 5, 1840. Kind, affectionate, honest, talented, he commended the religion he professed. He was sick but two weeks, then taken home. Joshua Barnes died on Stanton Circuit, November 19, 1839, in great peace, at the age of sixty-four. David B. Carter went home in great peace on the 28th day of October, 1840. John E. French died near Carlisle, February 3, 1841. Samuel H. Thompson, after spending twenty-seven years in the ministry, in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, and Illinois, died on the 19th day of March, 1840, at peace with all men, giving the most triumphant manifestations of the approval of his Master.

“NEAR UNITY, ILL., February 14, 1842.

“MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—In the midst of much company and conversation, I sit down to drop you a line. Our quarterly-meeting for Jonesboro Circuit closed last night. It was a meeting of some interest, though held in almost the darkest corner of my district. Intellectual and moral night still broods over the mass of inhabitants. Times, in a pecuniary point of view, have never been so hard here as they are now; the distress is great among all classes of the community. Money is almost out of the question, for the preachers or any one else. Unless we take our quarterage in coon skins, it seems to me that our prospects are poor for a comfortable living.

“Brother M’Murty is married; he was married the Tuesday previous to his quarterly-meeting. He had intended to have me to solemnize the rites; but the brother of his wife endeavored to defeat the match, and that caused them to hasten it a few days. He married a Miss Hill, in Brownsville, a prudent and fine girl, I think.

“I have preached once every day since I left home, except one, and sometimes twice a day. I preach to night again, to-morrow night, and so on. Part of the time since I left home my health has been worse, but in the main about as it was before I left. My mind was greatly troubled for one or two days, but since it has not been disturbed.

“Brother Don Carlos is as fat as a hog, and in fine spirits. He is going with me to Golconda.

“This has been a Winter of great mortality in this part of the country. Winter fever has been

very prevalent and fatal. Those earthquakes have been worse here than they were with us. It is only about fifty miles from this place to New Madrid, which was sunk by the earthquakes many years ago. I think it is likely that this region of country may yet be destroyed in that way at some future time.

"My eyes are very sore, particularly my right eye; I can scarcely see out of it at all at night. My horse is quite lame, and has been so for nearly a week. Nobody can tell what is the matter with him; and what will be the result I can not tell. I need not inform you that I have been unfortunate with horses. If Jack should fail I expect to ride over the district on foot till Conference, rather than to ask the brethren here to furnish another.

"I hope I have an interest in your prayers, and I can assure you that you and my dear children have in mine every day; and it affords me much gratification and comfort to invoke Heaven's blessing on my dear family morning and evening, though far distant from them. Take care of my babes. Excuse my haste.

"Yours, in the strong bonds of affection,

"A. E. PHELPS."

In the discharge of his duties as a presiding elder he saw the absolute importance of the "call" to the ministry, and the necessity for a better support of those called. He prepared and delivered the following sermon on the subject:

A SERMON ON THE CALL AND SUPPORT OF MINISTRY.

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."—MATT. IX, 38.

While the blessed Savior was engaged in the course of his personal ministry on earth he demonstrated the divinity of his person and mission by repeated and notable miracles. With a word or touch he healed the sick, cleansed the leprous, restored the palsied, rebuked malignant fevers, dislodged devils from the souls of men, and relieved the demoniac. And thus his ministrations, together with the demonstrations he afforded by his miracles, showing that he was the promised Messiah, drew around him vast multitudes of the children of Israel, who were panting for deliverance from Roman vassalage. Says the evangelist: "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest," etc.

Our text teaches us that laborers in the harvest of the Lord are chosen and thrust out by God himself. The Church, on her part,

where there is a scarcity of laborers, should pray the Lord to call and send forth additional ones unto her service; but she should remember that whenever she undertakes to select men for the work of the ministry, until God has chosen or called them to that work, she assumes a prerogative and authority which God has never given her. That God has reserved to himself the exclusive privilege of selecting laborers for his vineyard, or calling men to the work of the ministry, seems clear, from the Scriptures of divine truth throughout. That such was the economy of God, from the time revealed religion was introduced into our world down to the commencement of the Gospel dispensation, can not be successfully denied. In the patriarchal age the head of each family was the priest for his own household. Such were Methuselah, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. They not only offered prayer and sacrifice to God for their families, but also instructed them in those great truths of religion which had been revealed from heaven. In this capacity they acted, it seems, by divine appointment, and under divine approbation. Under the Mosaic age, or legal dispensation, the officiating priest received his appointment directly from God; and none ever

assumed the fearful responsibility of attempting to thrust themselves into the sacred office but Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whose temerity and rashness were severely rebuked by God in their fearful and miraculous destruction.

None, I presume, will deny that the sacred office was filled by divine appointment through all past ages, down to the advent of Christ. And as the Scriptures of the Old Testament abundantly teach us that religion was propagated and taught to the people, from the time it was first revealed from heaven to the full opening up of the Gospel dispensation, by an order of men called and thrust into the work by God himself, it affords a strong presumption in favor of a divine and special call to the office and work of the ministry under the Gospel dispensation. This presumption is greatly strengthened by the considerations that under this dispensation ordinances and sacraments were to be administered, the science of religion was to be taught to the successive generations of men, and the nations of the earth were to be disciplined to Christ. This required the unceasing and indefatigable labors of a Christian ministry whose time and attention should be exclusively devoted to the duties of their high calling. Hence it is clear that the sacred office

was designed to be perpetuated in the Christian Church to the latest age; and, if so, the conclusion is almost inevitable that the sacred or ministerial office should be filled by men called to the work by the Lord of the harvest. Thus, were the New Testament Scriptures entirely silent on this subject, the evidence afforded by the Old Testament Scriptures would be conclusive in proof of a direct call to the Christian ministry. For what was God's economy under the patriarchal and Mosaic ages we may safely conclude is his economy still, if we have no evidence to the contrary. And if God has surrendered the prerogative of calling men to the sacred office under the Gospel dispensation, he has certainly never revealed it. The interests of religion, the success of the Gospel, and the moral condition of the world, certainly as greatly need ministers and teachers of God's own calling as in any former period of the Church's history. These considerations afford many strong presumptions in favor of a special call to the work of the ministry.

But let us now examine the New Testament, and see if it does not afford evidence on this subject as well as the Old Testament. That the apostles were called of Christ, and

sent forth into the great work of discipling the nations, none will deny. But probably it will be contended that they were an extraordinary order of ministers, and had no regular successors in the same order. This is admitted, but it makes nothing against the call of ordinary ministers; for the regular order of the ministry was as much needed in the great work of saving sinners as the apostolic order, and therefore the call of the one was as necessary as that of the other. It is not claimed that those who succeeded the apostles in the ministry were inspired as were they; but this is no evidence that they were not called to the work. The apostle, when writing to the Ephesians, fourth chapter, eleventh verse, says: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Here the apostle tells us that evangelists, pastors, and teachers are as really given to the Church by Christ as apostles and prophets; and, as none will doubt that the latter received a direct and special call to their respective offices, it follows that the former, pastors and teachers, who constitute the regular orders of the Christian

ministry, were also called. As apostles, pastors, and teachers are all equally the orders of divine appointment, no reason can be assigned why one of these orders should not be called of God as well as another. Therefore, if this passage stood alone in the New Testament, it would sustain a divine call to the ministerial office. In the epistle to the Romans we have this passage: "And how shall they preach except they be sent?" This Scripture clearly recognizes a call to the work of the ministry.

The manner in which preachers were sent in those times is set forth in Acts xiii, 2, 3. The Holy Ghost said to the Church, or to the prophets and teachers of the Church at Antioch: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Thus we learn that the Holy Ghost first calls men to the work: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." The Church, on her part, ordains them by the imposition of hands, and separates them to the work, sends them forth or appoints them to their respective fields of labor. But should she separate men to the

work, or send them forth, whom the Holy Ghost has not called, she would assume a fearful responsibility.

Paul, in his valedictory address to the elders of the Church at Ephesus (Acts xx, 28), says: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." Although the apostle ordained these elders to the ministerial office himself, yet he recognizes their call to the work as of God. Paul, in speaking of the sacred or ministerial office in general, says, "And no man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." (Hebrews v, 4.) Here the apostle lays it down as a principle or truth, universally recognized in the Church, that no person, without profane assumption, could enter the ministerial office unless directly called of God, "as was Aaron." Thus these Scriptures seem clearly to sustain the doctrine of a direct call to the office and work of the ministry.

To this doctrine our Church has held ever since her organization, and her practice has been in conformity to her faith. They lay hands suddenly upon no man. She ordains none until they afford evidence of a divine call to the work. The very first question asked

of those who are presented for ordination is, "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the office of the ministry in the Church of Christ?" and none would be ordained who could not return an affirmative answer to this question. Nor could any be ordained till they have made a "full proof of their ministry." The itinerant is placed on trial for two years, and the local preacher for four years, before they are ordained. This time is supposed sufficient to enable them to afford demonstrations of their call to the work; and if they then fail to do this they are laid aside.

But it is objected to this that the Methodist Church examines into the qualifications of those who apply for license, and frequently withholds licenses from those who claim to have been called to the work; and this it is urged she has no authority to do if she admit the doctrine of a divine and special call. In reply to this we remark that, did the Church bestow license upon all who claim to have a call to the work of the ministry, she would license many impostors, and many that are themselves deceived, and are consequently unqualified to minister in holy things to profit. Although we believe in a call to the ministry,

we believe also that those who are called can afford some evidence of the fact. We believe that God calls no man of questionable moral character to the sacred office, or those who possess no qualifications for the work. And therefore, when such men propose themselves as candidates for the ministry, the Church should refuse to license them; and did she do otherwise she would at once prostrate her sanctity and dignity. Hence the practice of our Church on this subject is perfectly in accordance with the doctrine of Scripture, and consistent with her own faith in a divine call to the work. No man should attempt to enter the sacred office until he is convinced that he is a chosen vessel of God, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles; and it should be a subject of careful and mature consideration and prayer.

So weighty and fearful are the responsibilities of the ministerial office, that no man should attempt hastily or rashly to assume it. But after he has employed every means to learn his duty on this subject, if he have a clear conviction of mind that God has committed to him a dispensation of the Gospel, he should remember that "woe is to him if he preach not the Gospel." He should not confer

with "flesh and blood." Under a trembling sense of his own insufficiency, he should throw himself at once into the work, or offer himself to the Church, with an humble and firm dependence upon his God for the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and for divine wisdom to qualify for usefulness in his work.

But while the minister of God, thus called to the work, should devote himself with activity and diligence to prayer and to the ministry of the Word, the Church, on her part, should remember the fearful responsibility which rests upon her to sustain those whom God has called to this work. That it is the duty of the Church to sustain her ministry, who devote all their time and attention to her service, I presume none will deny. The Scriptures of divine truth leave no room for speculation on this subject. Under this Jewish dispensation, the law of God not only provides for the support of the priests, but determined the precise proportion each one was to contribute. This matter was not optional with them, as it is with us. They were required to give a tenth part of their income,—one-tenth of all the proceeds of their labor and the produce of their lands. Besides this, houses and cities were built for their accom-

modation at public expense. No less than forty-eight cities were devoted to the special use of priests and Levites. In addition to the cities erected for their occupancy, and the regular tithes, they shared a certain part of all the sacrifices offered. The first fruits of the land and of the flock were dedicated to the Lord, and became the inheritance of the priests. Thus the law of God made ample provision for the support of the priest under that dispensation.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

SECOND TERM IN THE ELDERSHIP—PEORIA DISTRICT.

Conference at Winchester—Ministers Received on Trial—Appointed to Peoria District—Low State of the Church—Discussion with Universalist Ministers—Missionary Collection at Wyoming—Conference Session at Quincy—Bishop Andrew—Delegates to the General Conference—Newton Berryman Near Canton—S. P. Burr and A. E. Phelps at Hendersonville—Sermon at Victoria in May, 1843—Appointed to Washington District—List of Presiding Elders—Prominent Pastors—Illinois Conference—Leading Ministers—Peter Cartwright—John Van Cleve—John S. Barger—Wilson Pitner—Hardin Wallace—W. D. R. Trotter—Addison Goddard—Suffered from a Carbuncle—Quarterly Meeting at Toulon—Debate with Latter Day Saints—A Mormon Lawyer Silenced—Smith's Arrest—Shot by a Mob—An Obituary—Rev. Joseph Mitchell—Death of His Babe—Lost His Way—Camp-meeting on Lafayette Circuit—Annual Conference at Peoria—Anecdote of Francis Smith—Decease of William Brown—Debate with Rev. W. Davenport—Success in Securing Subscribers for the Western Christian Advocate.

THE Conference met at Winchester, September 15, 1842. Seventeen were received. L. B. Dennis and David Oliver were of the number. Freeborn Haney and William J. Rutledge were of a class of nine in the year 1841. A. E. Phelps was appointed to the Peoria District. Chauncey Hobart was

pastor at Peoria. William C. Cummings was on Peoria Circuit, Samuel P. Burr on Mercer Circuit, William M. Clark was at Lafayette, William Royal at Monmouth, Warner Oliver at Pekin, George Whitman at Washington, and John C. Pinckard at Lacon. This was a long move for Mr. Phelps. He resided in Washington, in his own house. There Joseph W. Phelps* was born, December 22, 1842.

The Church was in a low state. A Universalist from the East came to Peoria and preached a series of sermons. His name was Chase. The reader must not confound him with Rev. S. W. D. Chase. On one occasion Mr. Phelps was called upon to close the meeting with prayer; he consented, and prayed with ardor for the conversion and final salvation of the speaker, who was so thoroughly provoked, that he arose and challenged Mr. Phelps to a public discussion of the questions at issue. The challenge was accepted, and in a few days the debate proceeded. It was a time of great interest. The doctrines of Hosea Ballou were then very popular in the West. Such a doctrine always thrives, when genuine Christianity has but little hold on the masses. This discussion put Universal-

* Now of Rock River Conference.

ists on the defensive and its champion to the test. His arguments were utterly annihilated, and, becoming excited, he accused the Moderators of allowing Mr. Phelps to overrun his time. The latter retorted pleasantly, "Why, brother, your watch must run on wheels." Either misunderstanding his statement or utterly confused, he quickly replied, "No it doesn't." The bursts of laughter that followed only increased the poor man's confusion. It was a glorious triumph for the cause of truth.* Mr. Chase was completely disheartened, and soon left the country.

He threw his whole soul into the work of the Church on his district. At a meeting at Wyoming he took a very large missionary collection. One man pledged himself to give twenty dollars per annum during his lifetime.

On the 3d of May, 1843, the True Wesleyan Church was organized. It found some warm adherents in the West.

The Conference met at Quincy, Illinois; twenty-three were received on trial, including Samuel Smith, Francis Smith, Hiram Buck, Sampson Shinn, and W. Milburn. Z. Hall was the preacher at Washington, Richard Haney was at Peoria, S. P. Burr and Francis

* S. R. Beggs.

Smith* were sent to Mercer. A German mission was organized in the Washington District this year. S. R. Beggs was transferred to Rock River Conference. John Morey, who had been received by transfer at a former Conference, was preacher-in-charge at Canton.

During this conference year the General Conference convened in New York, May, 1844. The case of Bishop Andrew, who had become a slaveholder by marriage, came up for adjustment. The excitement was intense. Peter Akers, J. Van Cleve, J. Stamper, Newton G. Berryman, and Peter Cartwright were the delegates from the Illinois Conference. N. G. Berryman and J. Stamper voted with the delegates from the South.

Mr. Berryman was a man of much power. After the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church South he became an active member of it. It is said that during his eldership on the Knoxville District, at a camp-meeting held near Canton, whilst William M. Clark was preaching with marked effect, a storm was about to break forth in wild fury. Some arose to go as the rain began to fall. Elder Berryman arose, walked to the front of

*The writer first heard Francis Smith preach in his father's house on this circuit.

the pulpit, threw his hands heavenward, and said, "My Lord, stay the storm!" told the people to be seated, and the cloud parted and passed on each side of the encampment.

The excitement on the question of slavery frequently occasioned disputes among Church members. At a quarterly-meeting held at Hendersonville, the question was asked of S. P. Burr, "Would you harbor a slave who had escaped from his master?" He answered, "Yes, I would!" Elder Phelps said, "That's right, brother Burr; the Bible commands you to feed the hungry and clothe the naked."

Mr. Phelps preached a sermon at Victoria in Knox County, Illinois, in May, 1843, from Acts xvii, 28: "For in him we live and move and have our being." He said:

These words form a part of a sermon preached by the great apostle of the Gentiles at Athens. Though Athens was the seat of learning in the Old World, the parent of classic literature, the source whence the light of science radiated in every direction, it was no less devoted to idolatry and sunk in the grossest superstition. In addition to her thirty thousand gods whom she set forth as objects of divine worship, she had an altar erected in

a public part of the city to the "Unknown God."

The inscription on this altar the apostle took as his text, and from it he preached to them the doctrine of the true God, whom they ignorantly worshiped. This God he set forth as the creator and preserver of all things. "For in him we live and move and have our being." Here the apostle asserts the doctrine of Divine Providence, that all nature, animate and inanimate, is perpetuated and sustained by God. And from this text I shall attempt to preach a sermon on the doctrine of a general and particular providence.

Who can calmly and soberly contemplate the works of nature as they exist, with the complex and multifarious, and yet regular and harmonious, motions and operations of the whole machinery, without being impressed with the sentiment that the providence of God controls, regulates, governs, and superintends the whole system.

There are no less than sixteen primary planets and some eighteen or twenty secondary planets that revolve around our sun, constituting what is called the solar system. Our earth by her diurnal and annual revolution travels no less than seventy thousand

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miles an hour. What power short of the omnipotent fiat of Jehovah is sufficient to propel such vast masses of matter at such a velocity and preserve regularity and harmony in the whole system?

It will avail nothing to say that the whole is governed by the laws of nature. The laws of nature themselves, apart from Divine Providence, are as inactive and powerless as any part of inanimate nature; the laws of nature are only the uniform methods by which God operates upon nature.

In addition to the solar system there are about one hundred millions of fixed stars, around each of which, most probably, a system of worlds revolves, perhaps as large and numerous as those of our own system. Who, then, can look at the vast system of nature, with her millions of worlds and systems of worlds revolving through boundless space with the most perfect order and harmony, preserved from age to age through the whole machinery, without being compelled to acknowledge the providence of God in the whole matter? The contemplation of this subject forced from the Psalmist the expression, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained;

what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalm viii, 3, 4.)

The providence of God over all the works of nature is clearly taught by the apostle in the epistle to the Colossians, first chapter, seventeenth verse, "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

But descend from the general system of nature to some of its particular operations connected with the interests of man, and we will find the particular providence of God equally manifested. Look, for instance, at the phenomena of rain, lightning, storms, and tempests. The philosopher will probably tell us that all this is attributable to natural causes, to the action of the laws of nature, or to the natural power of the various agents of nature. They would tell us, by the action of the sun water upon the earth's surface becomes decomposed, separated into fine particles, and thence ascends into the regions of air above us, and forms vapors, and then becomes condensed into fine particles or drops, and descends in refreshing showers of rain to fertilize and refresh the earth. Thus Divine Providence is excluded, and blind nature is left to manage her own interests and the interests of man.

But what say the Scriptures on the subject? They attribute the whole to the special providence of God. Deuteronomy xi, 14: "That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain, and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil." Again (Deuteronomy xxvii, 12): "The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand." Psalm cxxxv, 6, 7: "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures." Psalm cxlviii, 8: "Fire, and hail; snow, and vapor; stormy wind fulfilling his word." Says the prophet Amos (fourth chapter, seventh verse): "And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered." In Matthew, fifth chapter, forty-fifth verse: "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; and sendeth rain on the

just and on the unjust." It is useless to multiply quotations on this subject. Many more might be adduced, if necessary. In short, the Scriptures every-where attribute all these operations of nature to the providence of God.

Though these are effects of natural causes, and of agents that are at work in nature, yet these natural causes and agents are all under the control of Providence. But perhaps some are ready to admit that the providence of God is exercised over inanimate nature, and at the same time deny his providence over the moral world. This subject will now claim some attention. And, first, that his providence is exercised over the nations of the earth is most clearly revealed in the sacred oracles. That the rise and fall of empires, the establishment, the growth, and final overthrow of kingdoms, are represented in the Scriptures as all under the control of Divine Providence, no attentive reader of the Scriptures will deny. In proof of this read the twenty-third chapter of Isaiah, where utter desolation is threatened to Tyre by the Most High: "The burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them." (Verse 1.) Again (8, 9): "Who hath

taken this counsel against Tyre? . . . The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth." Here the complete overthrow of the beautiful city, the wealthy and luxuriant city of Tyre, is threatened by Jehovah himself, and was soon after executed.

I might now refer you to the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah concerning the desolation of Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, and the other neighboring nations whose crimes called for the vengeance of heaven to be poured upon them. Babylon, the proud queen of the old world, was to be left without an inhabitant, and Egypt was to become the lowest of kingdoms; and all was to be accomplished by the providence of God.

The enlightened and observing statesman might have accounted for the decline and final downfall of all these kingdoms and nations on natural and philosophical principles. They, for instance, might have attributed——

The remainder of this sermon can not be found among his papers. The broken column of the artist is a fit emblem of human life. Our fullest hopes are seldom realized; our

best work is often destroyed, or so mutilated that it must be represented by the ——. The Taj Mahal is but half done, although perhaps the grandest building on the earth.

At the General Conference of 1844 Peoria District was set over into Rock River Conference; and at the session of that Conference in July, 1844, Peoria District was divided, and the Washington District was formed. Mr. Phelps resided at Washington, and was appointed to that district. Richard Haney was appointed to the Peoria District; Luke Hitchcock was on the Ottawa District; Hooper Crews was on the Mount Morris District; J. R. Goodrich, the Chicago District; B. T. Kavanaugh, Plattville District; W. H. Sampson, Green Bay Mission District; James Mitchell, Milwaukee District; S. H. Stocking, Rock River District. John Chandler was pastor at Peoria; Samuel Pillsbury was at Macomb; John Morey, at Knoxville; N. P. Heath, at Rockford. J. T. Mitchell was Book Agent at Cincinnati. Seymour Stover was at Iroquois; Francis Smith, at Crow Meadow Mission.

The Illinois Conference met September 4, 1844. Mr. Phelps was now in the Rock River Conference, and hereafter he will not be associated with the good old leaders of the Illinois

Conference. Peter Cartwright needs no description; his fame is world-wide. Peter Akers was a man of fine personal appearance, large, robust, but genial and full of sunshine. In those days he was a most powerful preacher, frequently holding his audience for three hours. His work on Chronology will perpetuate his fame as a writer. John Van Cleve was a young man of great promise. John S. Barger was a man for the times. With a voice like a Boanerges, and a zeal that knew no abatement, he stood in his lot. And there was Wilson Pitner, fond of hunting and of jokes. Preaching once at the Wyoming Camp-ground, in Stark County, he suddenly halted and said, "Brethren, that tree would make good ax-handles." If he saw a knot-hole in a log whilst preaching in an old-fashioned school-house or private dwelling, he would pause and deliberately pull out his pocket-handkerchief and stuff it into it.* There were William J. Rutledge, James Hadley, Harden Wallace, Charles Holliday, William D. R. Trotter, and many other noble Methodist preachers, with

* Once, whilst in prayer, he cried out, "O Lord, send us a shower, send us a shower, send us a shower, if it is only a shower of woodpeckers!"

Whilst on Peoria Circuit his coat became so badly worn that he took a collection in his own behalf. At Kickapoo he

whom A. E. Phelps would meet no more in annual conference session.

In April, 1844, he suffered intensely from a carbuncle on the back of his neck. His quarterly-meeting for the Lafayette Circuit was at Toulon, and notwithstanding his affliction he went, and preached with great power.

In June he held a debate with a Mormon preacher by the name of Savage, at Toulon. The Mormons had taken refuge in Illinois in 1839, and were now engaged in building a grand temple at Nauvoo—"Beautiful," they called it. Their missionaries had canvassed many portions of Illinois, and had succeeded in converting a class-leader and others in the vicinity of Toulon. There was much excitement on the Mormon question at the time, and the desire to hear this debate drew together crowds of people. The Mormons came from all parts of the country. About twenty elders, bishops, lawyers, and other officials were in attendance. Their table was loaded with books to be used in their defense. In making some preliminary arrangements the

told the people that last year, at Conference, they said that his coat looked as if it had been made in the year "one." "Now, brethren, give me some help, so that I can go to Conference without my old 'one' coat." He did not like to beg, but when he did he brought down the money.

disputants were interrupted several times by a young lawyer from Nauvoo. Finally Mr. Phelps said, "Young man, you had better stay at Jericho until your beard grows out." The young man found his seat in a hurry, and did not interrupt the proceedings again.

Mr. Savage assumed that the plates found by Joseph Smith, the prophet, were the two "sticks" of Ezekiel; that the Prophet Isaiah described the same plates when he said, "The vision of all has become as the words of a book," etc.; that the Psalmist says, "Truth shall spring out of the ground;" that Ephraim is a distinct people, and should yet take possession of the promised inheritance; that the Christians were promised miraculous power; that the old Roman Church had abolished some of the sacraments. He claimed that the Book of Mormon proves the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the Bible teaches Mormonism. He claimed that the antiquities of South America vindicate the Book of Mormon and establish its claims to inspiration.

Mr. Phelps had no assistance. He arose with no book before him except the Bible which he held in his hands. He said he loved it: first, "Because it is the Word of God;" second, "It is my mother's Bible." He replied

to the numerous arguments of his opponent with great ease and clearness. He showed most conclusively that his opponent had perverted the passages of Scripture quoted to prove Mormonism. His assaults upon the Book of Mormon were overwhelming. At one time he greatly enraged the Mormons by calling it "that *blasphemous* Book of Mormon."

These "Latter-day Saints" soon found out, to their sorrow, that Presiding Elder Phelps was more than a match for their champion and all of his helpers. Mr. Phelps had met his opponent before, and told him so. He, having left a sister Church in disgrace, stoutly denied any knowledge of such a meeting. Mr. Phelps responded, looking him through with his piercing eyes, "Then the Lord has made two men exactly alike." This discussion completely vanquished the Mormons.

About this time Joe Smith and his brother Hiram were arrested and lodged in jail at Carthage, Illinois. His wife went to visit him, accompanied by two waiting ladies. She was a queenly looking woman, with bright eyes. Finally, an incensed mob shot Smith whilst in jail, and the Mormons removed to the far West; but their doctrines have lingered like a terrible blight, to curse our State.

Whilst attending his quarterly-meeting at Crow Meadow, the first ever held in that vicinity, Elder Phelps had a very remarkable dream, which he related to Rev. Francis Smith in the morning, before he had arisen for breakfast:

“In his dream he was journeying to a quarterly-meeting, and was overtaken by Rev. Jesse Haile,* who was in charge of three horses. After the usual salutations the following dialogue occurred:

“*Phelps*. ‘I thought that you were dead, brother Haile.’

“*Haile*. ‘I am; I died at Winchester some months since (giving the time), at the seat of the Illinois Conference.’

“*P*. ‘How is it that you are permitted to come back to earth? and what are you doing with those horses?’

“*H*. ‘I have charge of all the horses belonging to Methodist preachers; and these are some I found astray, and am returning them to their owners.’

“*P*. ‘Are you permitted to communicate what you know of the invisible world, or future state?’

“*H*. ‘Not every thing.’

“*P*. ‘How is it with you, brother Haile?’

“*H*. ‘I am happy. You know, brother Phelps, that I had a great many enemies, because of my plain preaching and unsparing rebukes of the vices and fashions of the day.’

“*P*. ‘I know you had.’

* He had been dead but a short time.

“*H.* ‘It is all the better for me now.’

“*P.* How do the respective denominations stand in the estimation of the inhabitants of heaven?’

“*H.* ‘All of them are esteemed for some things, but considered deficient in others. Upon the whole, the Methodist Church is considered nearest apostolic of any; but she is becoming too much conformed to the spirit and fashions of the world. The missionary enterprise is more highly esteemed than any other, and there is more interest taken in it than all others. You know Dr. Martin Ruter, who went to Texas as missionary superintendent and died there?’

“*P.* ‘Yes.’

“*H.* ‘He now has the superintendence of all the missionary interest of the heavenly world. You also knew John Dew, who was secretary of the Missionary Society of the Illinois Conference?’

“*P.* ‘Yes.’

“*H.* ‘He now occupies the same post in the heavenly world; and in the main the heavenly department of the missionary cause co-operates with the Church militant. Do you have as hard times in the itinerancy as formerly?’

“*P.* ‘There is little improvement.’

“*H.* ‘Does the Church pay the preachers better than formerly?’

“*P.* ‘There is some improvement in this respect.’

“Here brother Phelps told him what he received at his last quarterly-meeting. (This was Sabbath morning when he related the dream of the preceding night, while we yet lay in bed. When the funds were disbursed, Monday morning, it corresponded to the cent with the amount specified in the dream.)

“*H.* ‘The Church has driven many good and useful men from the work, crippled others by her penuriousness, and thereby greatly circumscribed the work. Do you think of locating?’

“*P.* ‘Yes; I am sometimes tempted to.’

“*H.* ‘Never locate, brother Phelps, but preach the Word with all its point and energy. Endure unto the end, and there is a crown of many stars for you.’ ”*

Those were times of trial for Methodist ministers, and doubtless on account of the meager claims of the pastor and presiding elder this dream was comforting. It is due Mr. Phelps to say here that he was no believer in spiritualism, but a most powerful opposer of that pernicious doctrine.

October 8, 1844, he wrote an obituary of Rev. Joseph Mitchell, who had died in Tazewell County, aged eighty-six. Shortly before his death Mr. Phelps visited him, and found him happy, with the prospect of meeting with Asbury, M'Kendree, Lee, and Freeborn Garretson. He had traveled in New York and New Jersey, the Floridas and Canadas. His last days were peaceful.

During his stay on this district he had the good luck to kill, near town, a deer, and

* Letter of Rev. F. Smith to the author, May, 1878.

several turkeys. He seldom "went hunting," and this success was the occasion of much comment by the preachers of his district.

On February 17, 1845, Charles Elliott Phelps was born. In June, Elder Phelps was away on his district, when word came of the dangerous illness of his babe. Subsequent to its death and funeral, which was conducted by Z. Hall, then pastor at Washington, he wrote to his father-in-law with reference to the sad event.

"WASHINGTON, ILL., June 2, 1845.

"DEAR FATHER,—As you requested me to write, this is to inform you that at eleven o'clock this morning, after funeral services at the church, we committed the remains of our dear little babe to the tomb. The deep anguish of a parent's heart on such an occasion can only be fully conceived by one who has had personal experience. He died of croup. He was taken worse on Friday evening after I left, and died on Sunday morning at one o'clock. On account of the excessive darkness of last night I got lost twice, and consequently lost so much time, that I did not reach home until seven o'clock this morning. Joseph is much better. If Providence permit, I shall bring my family to camp-meeting.

"Yours, affectionately, A. E. PHELPS."

A camp-meeting was held on the Lafayette Circuit. The attendance was small. The nights were cool, but the meeting was successful. Elder Phelps preached two sermons dur-

ing the meeting that are still remembered with pleasure by the Methodists of that day.

Conference met in Peoria, August 20, 1845. Boyd Lowe, Hector J. Humphrey, J. W. Agard, U. J. Giddings, W. G. Miller, and eighteen others were received on trial. Isaac M. Leihy, Asa Wood, Francis Smith, and Simon K. Lemon were ordained deacons. G. L. S. Stuff, Seymour Stover, Isaac Searles, Joseph Kelley, and F. Haney were ordained elders. Thomas S. Hitt and five others located. Alfred Brunson John Sinclair, John Morey, W. C. Cummings, and two others were on the superannuated list. Henry Summers was presiding elder on the Plattville District, N. P. Heath at Plattville, A. Wooliscraft was at Lewistown, U. J. Giddings was on the Mercer Circuit, B. T. Kavanaugh was agent for the American Colonization Society.

There was an increase of three hundred and seventy-nine on the Washington District. Francis Smith was still within the Washington District; he was much esteemed by his elder. One Sabbath G. H. Phelps went to hear him preach. When his father returned, George told him about the sermon. He said the text was, "How shall we neglect if we escape so great a salvation." F. Smith has ever had a very keen

sense of the ludicrous, and this was too much for his gravity; and for years he had only to be reminded of this statement of his text, in order to enjoy a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

In June, 1846, Elder Phelps preached the funeral sermon of Rev. William Brown, who had spent much of his life in the itinerancy. He had anticipated death, and watched the approach of the king of terrors without any sign of emotion. He charged his wife and five children to meet him in heaven. He tried to sing the "Bower of Prayer," when sight and hearing were fast failing. It was a moving occasion and cheering sermon.

Conference met at Galena, Illinois, and reported an increase of one thousand one hundred and seventy-nine. The total in the Rock River Conference at this time was eighteen thousand two hundred and nineteen. Of this number one hundred and twenty-nine were Indians and nineteen were colored people. Benjamin Applebee, W. M. Osborne, Milton L. Hancy, Alonzo Falkenbury, J. C. Stoughton, George Lovesee, H. V. Irish, and fourteen others were received on trial. A. E. Phelps was appointed to the agency of Mount Morris Seminary. Mr. Phelps was a kind and loving presiding elder. The preachers of his district

and the people greatly loved him and wept when his time of service expired.

About this time he held a debate with Rev. William Davenport. The preachers of that day do not agree as to this discussion; some insist that it occurred in 1843, and others in 1845. B. H. Cartwright is quite sure that it occurred in August, 1847; that it was held in the Campbellite (Christian) church, near Cameron. It was an occasion never to be forgotten. The correspondence, already alluded to, began in 1836. For months Mr. Davenport declined an engagement, but after much delay he consented to meet Mr. Phelps at or near Cameron, Illinois. This was unfortunate for the doctrines of Rev. Alexander Campbell.* The discussion was ably conducted on both sides. The first proposition affirmed "justification by faith only." The second affirmed that immersion is the only proper mode of Christian baptism. The third declared that infants are proper subjects of baptism. The fourth affirmed that baptism is for or in order to the remission of past sins. Mr. Phelps affirmed the first and third propositions. Mr. Davenport affirmed the second and fourth. During the discussion his

* Rev. F. Smith's letter to the author.

opponent asked a certain professor to come forward and translate a disputed word, and just as the "Disciple's" friends were beginning to rejoice, Mr. Phelps arose and placing his finger on the verse containing the word requested him to read it! The unlucky professor was badly chagrined, but was compelled to confess that *he could not read it*.

The closing speech on Infant Baptism by the affirmative was overwhelming. The entire audience was spellbound. All his critics suspended work and sat with heads erect, looking as if their day of doom had come. Just before he closed, a good Methodist gave vent to her feelings in ringing shouts of joy. Amens were heard on every hand. He turned quickly and said, "What do you think of that, brother Davenport?" Mr. D. replied, "Enthusiasm! *enthusiasm!* ENTHUSIASM! It is the spirit of Phelps." He replied quickly, and with evident good humor. "Oh, no, brother Davenport, if you could only get the water out of your head and the grace of God in your heart, it would make *you shout too*."

When Mr. Davenport arose to reply the excitement was so intense that he could not proceed. He said, "He had often seen similar excitements in the court-room, created by

an eloquent plea." Mr. Phelps quickly asked, "Did anybody shout?" During the debate the "Disciples," as a matter of course, did all they could to aid their champion, for such he was, and continued to send to him suggestions, notes, and comments, until, in his haste, he said in a tone full of vexation, "Go away, brethren, with your notes; you bother me." He did all that an earnest advocate of an erroneous doctrine could do; but public sentiment was clearly with his opponent, who, at the close of the discussion, baptized more than a dozen children of parents who had changed their views on the subject as a result of the debate. It was a battle of giants. The cause of orthodox Christianity had an able advocate in Mr. Phelps, and its adherents, without regard to sect, were glad to do him honor.

The advocates of the teachings of Alexander Campbell were much disheartened by this discussion. Some of them openly acknowledged their disappointment at the result, but attributed it wholly to the great ability of Elder Phelps, his fervor, and evident candor. Rev. William Davenport was no child in debate, and displayed great ability in many ways, and ought not to have been censured for the

result. The great Dr. Eck could not stand before the humble Martin Luther in debate, and Zwingli was more than a match for Luther on the subject of the "Real Presence" of the body and blood of Jesus in the bread and wine. S. G. Morse, a pioneer in Illinois, a man who helped to form its first constitution, and whose vote helped to make it a free State, was present throughout, and was much gratified at the result. Judge Quimby, a prominent member of the Baptist Church, was one of the Moderators, and ever after was Mr. Phelps's firm friend. This discussion substantially made him a Methodist, although he never severed his connection with his Church.*

Whilst on the Peoria District he took many subscriptions for the *Western Christian Advocate*. He kept these names with great care in a book provided for that purpose by the Book Concern. Here I read the name of Thomas J. Henderson, our General Henderson,† member of Congress; and there William Hall, of Elmira, Stark County, a noble, good man, whose house was the home of

*His funeral services were conducted by Rev. E. Wasmuth, of Central Illinois Conference.

† He so highly esteemed Elder Phelps that he had his name inscribed in the Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church at Washington City.

the Methodist preachers of that day. He said, "I have heard many great men preach; once have heard Dr. Clarke, Richard Watson, 'Billy' Dawson, and some of our best preachers in this county, but I do think Asahel E. Phelps was the greatest preacher I ever listened to."* Here is the name of Bennet Fleharty, of Henry County, who in those days would ride ten miles to lead a class-meeting, but has fallen asleep. Here I read the name of Judge Hulgate, a staunch old citizen in those early times, and here is the name of Jesse Knowlton, of Peoria, too well known to need description, and many others. In this way, as presiding elder, he laid broad and deep the foundations of Methodism in his district.

*To the author.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

AGENCY OF ROCK RIVER SEMINARY.

Trip to Mount Morris—Entered upon the Work of the Agency—Anecdote of a Wealthy Man—E. Ransom—Birth of a Son—Hard Times—Incessant Labor—Debate with Mr. Gardner—Mr. Phelps's Promotion—Conference at Chicago—Delegates to General Conference—Appointments—Letter to his Companion—Letter to his Father-in-law—Death of his Child—Letter to his Companion from Sycamore, Ill.—Trip to General Conference—Delegates—Preached on Board of *Ne Plus Ultra*—Boarded with a Methodist Family—A Funeral—Journey to Baltimore—Visit to his Brother, Hon. F. P. Phelps—Preached in Cambridge—Visit to Washington City—Returns to Baltimore—A Boat Race—Journey Home—Conference Session—Letter to his Companion—Death of James Lazenby—Statistics—Report of Rock River Seminary—Prominent Appointments.

A PLAN for building up the educational interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Rock River Conference was accepted by that Conference in 1845. The Seminary was located at Mount Morris, in Ogle County. The site was very beautiful; but the town failed to become a railroad center, and the school has been superseded by wealthier institutions. The demand for such a school in Northern Illinois was imperative.

The country was rapidly developing, and the necessity for an educated ministry was most apparent to all close observers.

Mr. Phelps was an intense lover of education, and had felt the need of such schools during his entire ministerial career. He was urged to accept the position as Agent by some of the most influential men in the Conference; and after mature consideration he assented to the proposition, and was consequently appointed. There were discouragements and burdens to be met and borne, but duty called, and he obeyed.

The division of the old Illinois Conference made the Rock River Seminary necessary. It had no endowment, was without suitable buildings, and without prestige. Thanks be unto God for old Mount Morris Seminary! Although now overshadowed by other colleges and universities, it will go down to posterity that its work of educating young men, at a time when the demand was very pressing, helped to lay the foundation of our present glorious Church.

Mr. Phelps and family proceeded to Mount Morris, a hundred and fifty miles from Washington, in wagons. Miss Electa Mitchell, granddaughter of the Rev. Joseph Mitchell,

accompanied them. Subsequently she became a teacher in the school, and was married to the nephew of Thomas S. Hitt.

A. E. Phelps entered upon the work of the agency with vigor. Philo Judson and J. C. Parks had preceded him in the agency for one year. The enterprise was on hand, and success was necessary to the future prosperity of the Conference. The new agent plead earnestly and eloquently for the cause of education. His appeals seldom failed to move the sympathies of the people. Sometimes ladies were so aroused to the importance of the enterprise as to deliberately pull off their finger-rings and ear-rings, and give them to him for the Seminary. At Crow Prairie he plead with a wealthy man for a liberal subscription, but without avail. Mr. Phelps had prayed for success, and felt that it was a just cause, and when he failed to secure help of this man of wealth he told him he expected he would lose heavily because of his refusal to help in this time of extremity. In a short time the man lost a horse, and afterwards gave liberally.

Elijah Ransom was teaching the village school in Mount Morris, and became warmly attached to Mr. Phelps. The friendship was mutual and permanent.

On January 29, 1847, a son was born, whom he named Charles Henry. On February 4th he wrote an account of his child's birth to his father-in-law; that Mary had chills; that the Seminary was doing well, had one hundred and fourteen students, but that money was very scarce. The Mexican War had broken out a few months before, and was now raging fiercely. President Polk had called for fifty thousand volunteers, and Illinois had responded to the call, and sent many of her best and bravest sons to swell the armies of Taylor and Scott. Times were hard, money scarce.

Many members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the West did not know the value of such a seminary of learning, and were loth to contribute. As agent, Mr. Phelps labored to promote the love of education wherever he went. Some men create enthusiasm in behalf of their cause by their own hearty espousal of the same. In many places he could do but little for the financial prosperity of the Seminary, but he seldom failed to create a deeper interest in the school at Mount Morris.

He was widely known, and was often called upon to defend the doctrines of our Church. The pastors were glad to receive a visit from such an agent. Their challenges for public

discussion were frequently thus placed into his hands.

In 1847 he held a debate with Rev. Mr. Gardner, then perhaps the most polished advocate of Universalism in Illinois. At that time Universalism was very popular. At Farmington there was a very large attendance upon the debate. Revs. J. Morey, R. Haney, B. C. Swarts, R. N. Morse, and other prominent ministers, were present. In Mr. Gardner he met the champion of Universalism in Illinois; and when the ordinary arguments against that popular and strangely fascinating doctrine had been presented, he followed up with an endless variety of new and positively startling "objections," supported by the Word of God. The questions were such as are usually discussed by Universalists and Methodists.

After Mr. Phelps had gone through with his argument, and had recapitulated it with the power of an intellectual giant, he said he had a few moments left, and he would use these as he saw best. He then referred his opponent to the fact that "we are going to the Judgment, where we must give an impartial account for all that we have said in this debate."

"Amen," responded Mr. Gardner.

"Our doctrines will be tested there."

“Amen,” responded Mr. Gardner.

Then he gave a most fearful description of the judgment scene, the ascension of the dead in Christ. He depicted the ascension of Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, and others, saying, as they come into the presence of the Judge on the great white throne, “Here, O Lord, are the souls which I have brought with me.” He then represented Thomas Paine, Voltaire, and others, as they come in the presence of God for judgment, and saying, “Here, O Lord, are the souls that I have ruined, and here am I.” He then gave a thrilling description of a noble-looking form at the head of a legion of lost souls, who, with haggard face and eyeballs of fire, addressed the Judge, “Here, O Lord, are the souls that I have ruined, and here am I.” “Say *amen* to that, brother Gardner. Say *amen* to that, brother Gardner.” He then read as from the Book of God the awful sentence; then repeated, “Say *amen* to that, brother Gardner.” He then described the descent into the bottomless pit in the awfully solemn words of Milton; then again responded, “Say *amen* to that, brother Gardner.”

By this time the audience had become bewildered with the terrors of the Judgment-day, and hung with painful suspense upon the lips

of the speaker.* Mr. Gardner himself seemed utterly overcome with fear; his face became as the face of the dead, whilst such a trembling seized upon him that he was compelled to take hold of the table by his side to prevent him from falling to the floor.

When Mr. Phelps sat down the outburst of emotion was irrepressible. Sobs were heard on every hand. Scarcely a dry eye could be seen in that throng of people. Mr. Gardner died soon after; it is said that his intimate friends maintain that he never recovered from the gloom that took possession of him under Mr. Phelps's closing speech. Poor man! he was shrewd, genial, and accomplished, but was defending a bad cause, and that, too, when assailed by a logical, self-poised, eloquent, poetical, earnest, and thoroughly religious man. Such a discussion as this was owned and blessed of God in the building up of the cause of Christ. This debate broke the power of Universalism in that region, and it has never recovered from the effects of it.

Conference met this year at Chicago, August 11, 1847. Thirty young men were received on trial. C. Lazenby, F. A. Reed,

* Rev. J. Morey, B. C. Swarts, R. Haney. Testimony to the author.

William Tasker, Benjamin C. Swarts, Roswell N. Morse, J. O. Gilbert, C. W. Batchelor, Henry Requa, and James Taylor were of the number. The increase in membership was small—seven hundred and sixty-one. The Conference reported for missions eight hundred and eighty-one dollars and eighty-seven cents; for Bible cause, fifty-seven dollars and fifty cents. John Chandler was appointed to the Chicago District, and Chauncey Hobart to the Racine District. Henry Summers, Richard Haney, Asahel E. Phelps, Philo Judson, and John Chandler were elected delegates to the General Conference. C. Lazenby was at St. Charles with Silas Bolles; F. A. Reed was at Wheeling with S. Stover; J. O. Gilbert was at Monmouth; B. C. Swarts was at Macomb with Barton H. Cartwright; James Taylor and C. W. Batchelor were at Forstland; William Tasker was at Hazle Green with Isaac Searl; H. Requa was in charge of Brothertown Mission; R. N. Morse was in charge of Peoria Circuit. His “assistant” preacher was a much older man than himself, by the name of William Gaddis. He was certainly a very eccentric man. During the year there were powerful revivals on the circuit.

At one appointment a grave, quiet Meth-

odist layman reproved some converts for their demonstrations of joy, alleging that "God is a God of order." At the next appointment at that place R. N. Morse preached, and Father Gaddis, as they called him, exhorted, and took especial pains to exhort the brother who had reproved the young people for shouting. He then led class-meeting. He first walked straight to the brother and said, "Brother, how does your soul prosper?" The layman arose very deliberately and said, "I have built upon the rock." Brother Gaddis responded, "Be sure of it, brother, be sure of it." He again said with greater emphasis, "I've built upon the rock!" Brother Gaddis, "Be sure of it, brother, be sure of it." The "brother" then went on to reply to the exhortation. Brother Gaddis said, "Sit down, brother, sit down. Brother Morse make this brother sit down." Young Morse arose with the dignity of an older minister, and quietly said, "Father Gaddis, I think you had better sit down. Brother, please sit down, too, and proceeded with the class-meeting himself.

Once Father Gaddis was at a temperance meeting which was addressed by Mr. Thomas, the celebrated apostle of temperance in Illinois, thirty years ago. Mr. Thomas compared

the Good Templars' secret meetings to class-meetings. Instantly Father Gaddis was on his feet, and thus addressed Mr. Thomas: "Sir, when you speak of class-meetings speak respectfully, sir;" and then took his seat. Mr. Thomas hesitated, and then responded, "I esteem the Methodists highly, and have great respect for their class-meetings." Again Father Gaddis arose and said, "Speak respectfully, sir, speak respectfully, sir," and sat down. The good temperance reformer was embarrassed, but was wise enough to change the topic. Notwithstanding his oddities, Father Gaddis was a man of real ability. Some of his sermons were very interesting.

Mr. Phelps entered upon his second year in the agency of Rock River Seminary with vigor. The agent felt a deep interest in the cause of education, and devoted his full strength to the business of the seminary. He was an excellent financier, a careful adviser, and an incessant worker. He made a minute of all items in connection with his household expenses,—the sale of books, the purchase of provisions, the amounts due him for board and received for board, the amounts paid for hired help; in fine, of every thing great and small. He was seldom at home on

the Sabbath. Sometimes he was absent many days. In February, 1848, he took such a journey, during which he wrote his wife:

“ALBANY, ILL., February 28, 1848.

“MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—As I have a moment of leisure while waiting for breakfast, I will commence a short epistle to you and the children. I met with some detention in my business on Saturday, and therefore did not get on to Rock Island to spend the Sabbath as I had hoped. I spent it in Albany, where I found some kind friends, and have been agreeably entertained. Since I left home my health has been poor. I think I had the sickest night on Friday night last that I have had for years; since then have been better. I presume it is the recurrence of my old complaint. Yesterday I was gloomy all day from some distressful dream the night before about home. I am fearful that you and Elizabeth are both worse. I looked strongly all day for a messenger for me, but perhaps it was only a dream. I shall leave this morning for Moline, thence to Rock Island. The first night after leaving home I spent again with my old friend M’Kean, and was most agreeably entertained. It is now March 2, 1848, Thursday morning, and I proceed in haste to close my letter. It is now cold and snowing very fast, and I have between thirty and forty miles to drive to-day. I arrived in this place (Rock Island) on yesterday morning, having visited all of our subscribers above before I came down. Brother Hall is in good health; sister Hall still has feeble health. Mr. Simson and his family are living with brother Hall. He closed business in Magnolia, and pur-

chased an interest in a steamboat, and ran on the river for the last six or eight months, but grew tired of the business and sold out, and is now doing nothing. Lewis Hall is driving a team for a living. I expect bad weather; if so, I may not be at home till after the middle of the month. If the weather and roads should be good, I shall be likely to be there on the 15th. Oh how anxious I feel to hear from you or George, informing me that you are all well. I could then prosecute my journey with cheerfulness. Tell Jody and Mary that I think about them every day, and want to see them very much. It affords me some comfort to indulge the hope that another year may release me from such drudgery, and so much absence from home. Excuse me for the present; breakfast is ready. I must eat, run down to the office, make several calls for money, and then start on my journey.

“Affectionately, yours, A. E. PHELPS.”

A few days after he reached home Charles Henry was taken sick, and on the 18th of March he died. His letter to his father-in-law is very touching:

“MOUNT MORRIS, ILL., March 20, 1848.

“DEAR FATHER,—I sit down this morning with a heart crushed with sorrow and a mind saddened with grief, to inform you that the King of Terrors has once more broken in upon our domestic circle. Our sweet babe has gone to heaven. He died of croup on Saturday morning, after nine days of severe suffering. O, my soul! what can support us in this deep affliction? Nothing—nothing but the special

grace of God. Oh my dear Charles Henry! How sweet the name and how hard to give him up. Never did I feel my spirit so crushed before. . . .

“Yours, affectionately, A. E. PHELPS.”

On March 31, 1848, he wrote to his wife from Sycamore, Illinois. He hoped she would accompany him to the General Conference at Pittsburg. His horse was stiff—a borrowed one, too. A rainy time. “Yesterday was one of the most gloomy days of my life. Every thing along the road reminded me of our journey to Conference and back last Fall, when our dear babe was with us in fine health and playful. Well, we have the consolation to know that all is well with him now, and we may enjoy his company again when friends meet to part no more.”

Such was the grief of Mrs. Phelps that she accompanied her husband to General Conference. George and Mary were left in the care of friends at Hennepin.

In company with D. Markley and his wife, they took a boat at Hennepin on April 17th. At Cincinnati the delegates chartered a boat, the *Ne Plus Ultra*. There were forty-five preachers on board. Peter Cartwright, Dr. C. Elliott, and Dr. Akers were of the company. Mr. Phelps was appointed to preach,

which he did with good liberty from the eighth verse of the forty-eighth Psalm.

This General Conference was one of very great interest. The Methodist Episcopal Church South sent Dr. Pierce as a "Fraternal Delegate." The Conference was opened in Pittsburg, May 1, 1848, by Bishop Hedding. Bishops Waugh and Morris led in prayer. J. M. Trimble was elected secretary. In the appointment of Conference Committees the Rock River Conference delegates were appointed as follows: H. Summers and R. Haney on the "State of the Church;" A. E. Phelps on "Book Concern;" "Expenses of the Delegates," Philo Judson; "Itinerancy," John Chandler; "Episcopacy," Hooper Crews. J. A. Collins was chairman of the Committee on "Book Concern." Dr. George Peck was the chairman of the Committee on the "State of the Church."

Early in the session a communication was presented by Dr. L. Pierce, relating to the establishment of fraternal relations between the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was referred to the Committee on the "State of the Church" and action upon it was postponed. On May 24th the Committee on the "State

of the Church" presented, and the Conference passed by a large vote, a resolution declaring that the General Conference has no authority to divide the Church. The Rock River delegates voted for the resolution.

The question of a division of the Church property excited much interest. The General Conference finally authorized the Book Agents to arbitrate the case, if necessary.

The session lasted five weeks. Mr. Phelps and family had a pleasant boarding-place, with a good Methodist family. During his stay he was called upon to attend the funeral of a young lady, daughter of a next-door neighbor.

At the close of the General Conference they went to Baltimore. The journey across the mountains, in a four-horse stage-coach, was very tiresome. After spending a few hours in Baltimore they proceeded to Cambridge, where Hon. F. P. Phelps, his elder brother, then resided. He was a wealthy man, and a slaveholder. They had not met for thirty years, and much enjoyed the visit. But they had grown apart. Hon. F. P. Phelps had become a thorough slaveholder; A. E. Phelps scorned the whole slave system, and was outspoken in his opposition to it. One morning he heard his brother calling to his slave-boy to come and

assist him about dressing. He responded, quickly, "What do you want of Jack? Get up, and dress yourself, as I do." During the remainder of his visit Jack was not called upon to assist any body in dressing.

Notwithstanding these differences on political and moral questions, the visit was very pleasant. On Sabbath A. E. Phelps preached in Cambridge, to the delight of his brother and many others. He then went to Washington City, and succeeded in collecting something for Rock River Seminary.

Returning to Baltimore, he met his wife and Joseph. Mrs. Phelps had been greatly frightened by a boat-race that morning, and was pleased to find her husband in waiting for her as usual, prompt to a minute. They came home by way of Buffalo, Detroit, and Chicago; thence by canal to Peru, which they reached on Saturday evening. After an absence of three months, they reached Mount Morris in good health and spirits.

"CANTON, ILL., August 2, 1848.

"MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—As I have a leisure moment this morning, before starting to Conference, I have concluded to commence my epistle to you, and finish it when I have time. We had a pleasant journey to the place, but did not reach here until

Monday evening, owing to my detention at the Wyoming Camp-meeting till after Sabbath. There I had the gratification of seeing many of my old friends, and the peculiar pleasure of preaching twice a day to them. Among others were sister Kern and family. John Blackburn lives with them, and has learned to work very hard. He came up to the camp-ground, driving a two-horse team loaded with people. Mother Kern and Catherine are living in Washington. I learned, in passing through Charleston, that they had taken the liberty to announce an appointment for me, without my knowledge, to lay the corner-stone of their church, on next Saturday week, the 12th of this month; consequently I can not possibly be at home before the following Wednesday or Thursday, the 16th or 17th of the month. We expect a protracted session of the Conference. Brother Devore is now very sick—thought by his physicians to be dangerous. I am very comfortably situated with a kind Presbyterian family, near the Conference room. All I lack of being completely happy is the presence of my wife and children. Nothing can altogether atone for their absence.

“August 5th. It is now Saturday morning, and I proceed to finish my letter in haste, as I have but few minutes to write. Conference has progressed very rapidly and pleasantly with its business as yet; and but for Mitchell's case and brother Babcock's, I think we would have a short session. Brother Mitchell's case will come on Monday next. Brother Babcock's case was called, and laid over to some other time. It will come up next week. I think he is not crazy, as was reported, but is much de-

voted to Mesmerism. Mitchell's case will be apt to be a very tedious one. He has solicited me most ardently to defend him before the Conference, and so have his friends, with much importunity; but I beg to be excused. Brother Janes and Professor Oulds are received on trial in the traveling connection. The other cases from Mount Morris have not come up. Brother Van Cleve is here, and boarding with me. He would like to be transferred to our Conference, with several others from Illinois. I saw sister Whitman on yesterday; she says she must have a private interview with me to-day. I suppose she wants money, and wishes to engage my services to present her claims to the public. I perceive we will have the opportunity of getting relieved of any surplus funds we may have on hand. Already I have had the privilege of giving about five dollars for charities, and the prospect of a demand for several more. Brother Devore is now a little better, but still delirious, and is yet in danger. We have had a great deal of rain here within the last few days. The streets and roads are intolerably muddy. I can not tell you any thing about my appointment, only the preachers seem determined to keep me in the agency another year. The Seminary has not come up. I am exceedingly anxious to hear from you and the children.

"I did not finish my letter on Saturday, on account of a crowd of business that could not be dispensed with. It is now Monday morning, and I proceed to close. I have enough to do at this Conference. I am chairman of four committees, and have preached twice since Conference commenced,

and have to make a speech before the missionary meeting this afternoon. Excuse my errors; for I have written this during incessant conversation, and have not time even to look over it and correct mistakes. Brother Cunningham, of the Illinois Conference, is dead. Devore is getting better. Look for me about Wednesday or Thursday, the 16th or 17th of the month.

"Yours in haste,

A. E. PHELPS."

Conference met at Canton, August 2, 1848. C. C. Olds, W. J. Smith, W. P. Jones, James F. Chafee, Jesse B. Quinly, W. S. Fidler, A. D. Field, Jonas J. Hedstrom, and four others, were received on trial. James Lazenby had died during the year—was thrown from his buggy whilst going to his appointment. From this injury he died in thirty-six hours after the accident. Before death he said, "Tell my brethren, if I should die, that Christ is precious; he is all in all. All is well; my way is clear." He enjoyed the blessing of perfect love, and his spirit

"Clapp'd its glad wings, and soared away,
To dwell in everlasting day."

It is a fact worthy of remark that, according to the statements of the obituaries of the Methodist preachers of those times, many were public professors of entire sanctification.

Methodism was rapidly developing in the Rock River Conference. This year, Clark Street reported 321 members; Canal Street, 193; Indiana, 77; Chicago Mission, 135; Peoria Station, 301; Monmouth Circuit, 333; Rock Island Station, 91, Circuit, 108; Washington, 270; Pekin, 226; Canton, 334; Lewistown, 381; Galena, 87; Hennepin, 311; Mount Morris, 205; Rockford, 262; Lafayette, 393.

Mr. Phelps, in behalf of the Committee on Education, made an able report, in which he showed the need of better facilities for the education of our youth. He claimed that they would be educated, and it remained for us to say whether infidels and Romanists should have them, or whether we will educate them for God. The Conference reaffirmed its confidence in Rock River Seminary, pledged renewed efforts for its support, and agreed to raise five cents a member on each charge.

A. E. Phelps was reappointed to the agency, and C. C. Olds was appointed Principal; G. L. S. Stuff, Pastor. Philo Judson was presiding elder on the Mount Morris District. J. J. Hedstrom was appointed to the Swedish Mission. He was a younger brother of Pastor Hedstrom, of the Bethel Mission work in New York.

The last General Conference had set off the Wisconsin Conference, which reported in 1849 a membership of 7,211. Chauncey Hobart, Francis Smith, John Luccock, W. J. Miller, David Brooks, Henry Summers, Elihu Springer, I. H. Leihy, and C. G. Lathrop were in that Conference.

Mr. Phelps continued his work for the Seminary with unabated interest. He was so absorbed with business that he scarcely took time to see to his own wants or those of his family. One day he went out to hunt his cow, and found one that he thought looked like his own. In passing a neighboring house he called out, "Sister Gruble, is this your cow?" She replied, "Why, no; it is yours." He answered, "I thought so, but was not sure of it." Sister Gruble greatly enjoyed the joke. Although a close observer, his mind was so heavily burdened with the business of the agency that such a mistake was a matter of course.

In 1849 Conference met at Rockford, on July 17th. A. Fisher, P. T. Rhodes, and six others, were received on trial. The Conference reported 14,679 members, including probationers, and reported \$1,410 for missionary money. The indebtedness of the Seminary

was reported at \$10,000; available notes, bonds, \$14,045.35; collected, \$1,885.21; new subscriptions, \$3,000. Hooper Crews was appointed to the agency of Mount Morris Seminary. R. Haney went to Clark Street, Chicago; R. A. Blanchard, to Canal Street; Z. Hall, to Indiana Chapel; J. F. Devore, to Waukegan, P. T. Rhodes to Mercer. A. E. Phelps was appointed to Galena Station.

It was a long move for him. It would have been pleasant for his family to have remained in Mount Morris, but he was thoroughly tired of the agency. Yet the death of his dear child had made a deep wound upon his heart, and he felt loth to turn away and seek a home elsewhere. Otherwise the appointment was satisfactory, and the reader will find him next actively engaged in the work of his new charge.

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

PASTORATE AT GALENA.

Situation of the City—The Home of Ex-President Grant—Dr. J. H. Vincent's Pastorate—Mr. Phelps's Lecture on Infidelity—Rev. Matthew Sorin—Letter to his Father-in-Law—The Winnebago Swamps—Preached at Toulon—Decease of Benj. F. Bestor—Conference at Plainfield, Ill.—Bishop Hamline—The Appointments—Cholera in Galena—Birth of a Little Daughter—Debate with Rev. Mr. Lyons—Success of his Protracted Meeting—Appeal to a Wealthy Man—Scene in a Shop—Close of his Meeting—One Hundred and Thirty Accessions—Family Sickness—Trip to St. Paul—Visits Minnehaha Falls—Rev. Chauncey Hobart—Diligence as a Pastor—Entries in his Pass-book—Family Government—Controversy with Rev. John Hughes—Conference at Peoria—Bishop Waugh—Expulsion of J. C. Parks—Appointments.

GALENA, situated on the Galena River, was then rapidly developing. The lead mines in that vicinity contributed to its growth. There were many miners there. The reader will remember that this city was formerly the home of ex-President Grant. The Methodist pulpit was generally filled by able men, a custom which continues notwithstanding the decline in the prosperity of the city. Dr. J. H. Vincent was once pastor there. The city is situated in a romantic region, several miles

from the Mississippi River. There was much smelting done there then, and many strangers there in quest of ore.

Mr. Phelps soon reached his new field of labor, and resided on Bench Street. He entered upon the duties of his charge with much vigor. He soon attracted the attention of the floating populace, and the people went in crowds to hear him preach. He had great faith in the Gospel, and presented it in its purity with much power. Many wicked people heard the message with delight. He found much infidelity there, and delivered a series of lectures on the subject to the great delight of the crowds in attendance. Rev. Matthew Sorin, then a superannuate, warmly sustained this attack upon the powers of darkness and delivered lectures on the same subject, with like good success. A powerful revival followed. The following letters and notes may be of interest:

GALENA, ILL., September 5, 1849.

“DEAR FATHER,—One week ago I arrived with my family and goods in my new field of labor, which was the 29th, of August. We are comfortably situated in a good house, in a convenient part of the city, on Bench Street. We are much pleased with our new friends and home. George is going to an academy at seven dollars per quarter; Mary and Joseph

go to the select school at four dollars. The Church here is comparatively poor, and in debt. We have had one death by cholera, and the small-pox is here. Religion is at a low ebb, but we are expecting some prosperity.

Yours, affectionately,

“A. E. PHELPS.”

On September 9, 1849, he wrote of the death of Mrs. Mary Babb, of Lacon, Illinois, widow of the late General J. Babb. She “could say nothing until just before death, when she said ‘All is well.’” He styled her a “noble Christian woman.” The meeting, held during nine weeks, was a glorious success. Rev. M. Sorin rendered efficient help. Seventy-nine united with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In the Spring the gold excitement carried many to California. Many went from Galena; four stewards, three trustees, and about twenty other Methodists went. Mr. Phelps still worked away vigorously. Writing to his father-in-law, he thus describes his labors:

“I preach twice each Sabbath and once on Wednesday night; conduct two prayer meetings, and meet two or three class-meetings, and teach a large Bible class. We have leaders’-meeting every other Monday night. And besides all this I am called upon to attend a great many funerals. We have nearly two hundred and fifty Church members, which I visit regularly every month. California is robbing thousands of wives of husbands, and children of

fathers. I presume that Rebecca and Martha Ann are gloomy and despondent."

Some time after this he made a visit to his friends at Toulon. Whilst crossing the Winnebago Swamp, "Dad Joe" attempted to pilot them across Inlet Creek with a blind horse kept for that purpose. The horse made a slight mistake, and the wheels of the buggy ran off the corduroy bridge—which was now all under water—and Mr. Phelps leaped out into water waist deep. Little Mary and Joseph thinking that all was lost, fell upon their knees in prayer in the bottom of the buggy. When their father looked up and saw them, he could not resist laughing; and could never tell it afterwards without a hearty laugh. He changed his clothes in an old deserted cabin, in which crime had been committed by a member of the Western banditti.

Whilst at Toulon, at the persistent and earnest request of his old friends, he preached a cheering sermon. He delighted to meet with old friends, of whom he had many on his charges and districts. He seemed to know exactly how to adapt himself perfectly to men, women, and children of all ages, and was alike interesting to all. He was a close student of men as well as of books.

During this year Benjamin F. Bester died on the Peru Circuit, of bilious colic. "Though ardently attached to his interesting family, when informed he must die, he first committed the care of his charge to his God and Savior, then, bidding his family farewell, he sweetly fell asleep." Absalom Shinn was taken sick on the Washington Circuit, and, being unable to continue his work, he returned to Canton, and spent the remainder of his short life in exemplifying the power of the atoning blood. He was as calm as a Summer's evening, and thus passed home on the second day of August, 1849.

Freeborn Haney died at St. Charles, August 6, 1849. He had been stationed at Knoxville, Indiana Street, Chicago, Ottawa, and St. Charles since his connection with Rock River Conference. He died of cholera. Being asked if he had any message for his brethren of the Conference, he said, "Tell them I have not been as faithful as I ought, but the religion I have preached to others for nine years now powerfully supports me in death."

Conference met at Plainfield, Will County, Ill., July 17, 1850.

PLAINFIELD, July 17, 1850.

"MY DEAR WIFE AND CHILDREN,—I have seldom when absent felt so much anxiety of mind about

my family. I understand there is cholera in Rock Island, Pekin, Peoria, Magnolia, and other places; and as the weather has been intensely hot, I am very fearful it has found its way to Galena before this time. I wish I had brought you all to Mt. Morris, and left you there. My health has not been good; I have suffered much from cold and dyspepsia. I have received nothing from you yet. I wait with great impatience. Conference opens this morning. The committees have been closely engaged for two days. The bishop and his family are here in very feeble health. He takes his wife and son with him to bury him, as he does not know at what moment he will drop off. His disease is the enlargement of the heart. Most of the preachers are here. I will not finish this letter until to-morrow; perhaps I may get one from you to-day.

"It is now Thursday afternoon, the 18th of July. and yet no letter from you. Oh what anxiety I feel to hear from home. I have preached the funeral sermon to-day of Sister Jacobs, formerly of Washington. You knew her. She had been looking forward to Conference with a great deal of interest, and had petitioned for me to board at her house. Little did she think then that I would preach her funeral sermon the second day of Conference. Oh how uncertain is human life. Brother Humphrey has lost his wife and child recently. Conference progresses rapidly. I think it very likely that I may be at home by Saturday week, the 27th of this month. Your father's family is well. I heard from brother *Wooliscroft*. They expect us on that circuit next

year. How would you like it? Tell Jane that James and wife are well; he is as fat as an Irishman, has been doing very well the past year; many inquiries about her. Brother Barger and two or three other brethren are here from Illinois Conference. I believe I will not close this letter until morning, to see if I can not get one from you. It is now Friday, and still no letter from home; I am in great distress. I must now close, as my hands are full every moment. I think I may be at home by the time this letter reaches you. Excuse my haste.

“Your affectionate husband,

“A. E. PHELPS.”

Bishop Hamline presided. Philo Judson was the secretary. Of the seventeen received on trial were S. A. W. Jewett, James Baume, Henderson Ritchie, John P. Brooks, Wilbur M’Kaig, A. Errickson, and Silas Searl. The increase in membership was two thousand seven hundred and fifty-two. Contributed for missions, two thousand and forty-eight dollars and eighty-four cents; for Sunday-school Union, sixty-six dollars and fifty-two cents. Philo Judson, John Morey, Henry Whitehead, and Wesley Batchelor were among the superannuates. Professor C. C. Olds was transferred to the Michigan Conference. Henderson Ritchie was on the Washington Circuit with W. C. Cummings in charge, and walked all the way

from Greencastle, where he had been attending the Indiana Asbury University, to his new circuit. A. Wooliscroft was on the Knoxville Circuit; Wilbur M'Kaig was the junior preacher. John P. Brooks was the junior preacher at Macomb. Silas Searl was professor of languages in Rock River Seminary. James Baume was the junior preacher at St. Charles. S. A. W. Jewett was in charge of Wheeling Circuit. The class of this year was remarkable for the ability of its members. A. E. Phelps was returned to Galena; Richard Haney was his presiding elder.

On August 21st he wrote to his father-in-law:

“Through the mercy of God we are still alive and on our feet. The work of death is still going on. In thirty-six hours after the cholera reached here sixty citizens had fallen victims to it. The hearses go day and night. It is the most fatal in the northern part of the city. We have lost some of our best members. In one family near us, five out of seven have died; a father and four children, leaving a mother and babe three weeks old. I must stop and attend a funeral. Such a scene of distress as we have had before us the last two or three days is seldom known anywhere. I have taken my wife to the hill back half a mile from the scene of distress; she wants me to leave too, but this would not be right. Much cloudy weather and rain for the last five days. Have run until I am almost worn out.”

When Richard Haney came round to his quarterly-meeting he found him at his post. Little Joseph told the presiding elder that his teacher would not kneel during prayer at the opening. Elder Haney said, "Well, Joe, I'll tell you what to do; the next time, when she gets done reading her Scriptural lesson, go up and kneel down at her table and I will give you a quarter of a dollar." "Joe" promised to do so, and kept his promise to the letter, and received his "quarter." That teacher knelt ever after that.

In October he received an affectionate letter from Joshua Barret, assuring him of the continued friendship of his old acquaintances at Mount Vernon, and stating that they had, at their own expense, made some improvements on his lot there. January 14th, he wrote to his father-in-law that "on January 11, 1851, his wife had presented him with a little daughter, 'fairest of all.' George is almost ready to eat it up. I have commenced a meeting, and have no help, not even an exhorter. The church has been well filled for several months."

He had just closed a debate at Elizabeth with a "Disciple," of Rev. W. Miller. Rev. Lyons had been making many proselytes from other Churches, including some Methodists.

Mr. Phelps met him and so overpowered him in a few hours, that he deliberately walked out of the house and left for parts unknown. Subsequently he was arrested and convicted of bigamy. He served out his time, but did not return to his wife in Illinois. He was soon married again somewhere in the East. After this discussion Mr. Phelps wrote, "I do not like such business, and hope hereafter that duty will never again call me into the field."

His meeting was a glorious success. One evening the pastor went to a prominent citizen present and invited him to come at once to the altar of prayer. The gentleman felt insulted, and as he had been a strong financial supporter of the Church, some of the official members broached the subject to Mr. Phelps in a shop, where they incidentally met, telling him his zeal had been misguided, and that he must apologize, or he would be the loser by it, as this man would certainly withdraw his support. The pastor listened a few moments, then sprang to his feet and said: "My God! has it come to this, that a *Methodist preacher* can not invite sinners to go to the altar of prayer and seek the salvation of their souls without being *reproved* for it by his own official members? Let us pray." In a short time

all in the shop were weeping, and in a few days the wealthy man was most powerfully converted. The brethren saw their error, and heartily supported the conduct of their faithful pastor.

On April 20, 1851, he wrote :

“Our meeting lasted over nine weeks; had no help at all—two services a day for many weeks. Have been more than a hundred conversions, and one hundred and thirty accessions to our Church. . . . Our brethren are about organizing a new charge in the city, and hope to secure my appointment to it. . . . My health is declining; was in bed last week. We are still trying to live for a better world.”

On May 6th he wrote of the sickness of their babe: “Had spasms, two in quick succession. There was much sickness in the city. Funerals take up much of my time. The weather has been cold since the first of the month.” He had heard news involving the pastor at Peoria in serious difficulty, but hoped it was not true. “All goes pleasantly here; our house is still crowded, and people often go away for want of room.”

His health was poor, a result of overwork. Early in the season he took a trip to St. Paul, in company with his family, by a boat called the *Nominee*. The captain was acquainted with

him, and took them the round trip for twenty dollars. An act of kindness to a disciple in the name of a disciple is not without its reward. While stopping to "wood" the good captain quite reversed his charitable manifestations by scaring the crowds of Indians almost out of their wits, by several quick deafening blasts from his engine. The poor fellows fell flat on their faces at the first blast, to the great amusement of the passengers of the *Nominee*.

Mrs. Phelps remained at St. Paul whilst her husband and eldest son, George H., visited Minnehaha Falls. Chauncey Hobart was their pastor at St. Paul, and gave the family many marks of kindness and friendship. In a few days the *Nominee* bore them back to their home in Illinois.

As a pastor he was industrious to a fault, if possible. In July, 1850, about the 24th, he was appointed the second time to Galena. In two months he wrote in a pass-book, "I commenced my second round of pastoral visitations on the 16th day of September, 1850." At a later date he added, "*Again*, December 24, 1850." Thus he had been "round" twice in five months, and had started on the third round. During the revival season his labors,

including much pastoral work, must have been very abundant. He also taught his children to work. During his first year at Galena he hired George to Mr. Packard at two dollars per week. Some time subsequently he again wrote, "George Harris commenced, on the 1st day of August, 1850, to clerk for Mr. Packard at fifteen dollars per month." He required George, who boarded at home, to cut *three sticks of wood* each morning before going to the store. One morning George neglected to cut his wood; his father went to the store and told him he must cut the wood. He, of course, asked permission of his employer, who at first hesitated; but when Mr. Phelps explained his reasons for such a requirement, he cheerfully yielded, and George went back home and cut the "three sticks of wood." This may seem like a small thing to mention in a volume like this. Life is made up of little things, and no man or woman can be truly great and neglect trifles. The Bible requires "deacons" and "bishops to rule their own house well." He was equally careful in his attendance to business. Hundreds of entries indicate how exceedingly careful he was to make notes of every thing of a temporal as well as spiritual nature. The texts he used

during his pastorate at Galena are all on record; also on his different districts.

In 1851—some say 1850—he held a discussion with Rev. John Hughes, of the Christian Church (Campbellite, so-called), at Vermont, Illinois. That Church was then very popular. The Presbyterians and Methodists were weak, and struggled to maintain a hold on the people. Dr. Hughes was an eloquent speaker and successful revival preacher. One Sunday morning, before baptizing several candidates of Methodist antecedents, he challenged the whole world to confute his positions on baptism. Some of the Methodist brethren immediately sent the challenge to Mr. Phelps. In a few days he knocked at Dr. Hughes's door, and told him he had come to accept his challenge. The propositions for discussion were: 1. Baptism by immersion is the only valid mode. 2. Sprinkling or pouring was practiced during the first century, and is valid baptism.* 3. That infant baptism is valid, and was practiced in the primitive church. Dr. Hughes affirmed the first, Mr. Phelps the second and third. The discussion was to be held in the "Christian Church." It then had a membership of near five hundred.

* Rev. W. J. Smith's letter to the author, July 9, 1877.

They promptly agreed upon all the terms for an immediate discussion.* “Every body was at once excited, and viewed the little man Phelps as a used-up man. The first day’s discussion I sat as moderator; and, being warmly in sympathy with Dr. Hughes, I felt, after the opening speech, that his victory would be complete. Mr. Phelps’s reply was mild, but full. Dr. Hughes’s second speech I felt was a good one, and could not see how Mr. Phelps could answer it; but the answer came. I then felt that every position taken by Dr. Hughes was completely overthrown. I began to feel alarmed, but hoped that Dr. Hughes would be able to right himself up. In the evening we met again. Dr. Hughes repeated his former positions and arguments. I was beat. Mr. Phelps’s reply was overwhelming, and his testimony and arguments in defense of his mode of baptism were endless and powerful. Dr. Hughes never made another argument, but commenced exhorting his members not to be led away nor deceived by this man Phelps. After Mr. Hughes failed to present any argument, Mr. Phelps would present the very strongest ‘Disciple’ theory of baptism for him, and then answer it.

*Hon. Thomas Hamer, to the author, June 27, 1877.

“The discussion closed after the second day, Dr. Hughes failing to come to time. Mr. Phelps preached for the Methodist people, and left for his home. A complete revolution in religious feeling took place. The Methodists commenced gaining ground; the Presbyterians revived, and built a new church. The ‘Disciples’ have not to this day recovered from the shock. Some of their best members have since joined the Methodists.

“I have heard many discussions, and strong debaters; but I must say Rev. A. E. Phelps was the strongest and best debater I have ever heard. He had a fine flow of language, a memory without fault, and was thoroughly conversant with his subject. He could quote any and, I believe, every Scripture in the Bible from memory.”

At the close of his labors in Galena there were one hundred and fifty-eight members and one hundred and twelve probationers; total, two hundred and seventy.

Conference met at Peoria, July 16, 1851. Bishop Waugh was President; R. Haney was Principal Secretary. The increase in membership was fourteen hundred and forty-five. J. C. Parks was expelled from the Church. He was the pastor in Peoria. The sad reports referred

to in Mr. Phelps's letter proved too true. The effect on the Church in Peoria was bad. The membership, from a total of three hundred and three, fell to two hundred and forty-five. D. A. Faulkenbury, G. W. Miller, W. J. Beck, S. B. Baker, M. P. Sweet, Elijah Ransom, and ten others, were received on trial. William Royal had died on Livingston Circuit. No obituary appears in the Minutes. He was a good man, and had a more enduring record. The presiding elders were, John Sinclair, O. A. Walker, John Chandler, Milton Bourne, A. E. Phelps, Richard Haney, and Luke Hitchcock. Galena was left to be supplied. John P. Brooks was sent to Galena Mission. G. W. Miller went to Mackinaw Mission. Elijah Ransom was junior preacher on Crystal Lake Circuit. W. J. Beck was at Marietta as junior preacher, with W. J. Smith. Henderson Ritchie was junior preacher, with R. N. Morse, on Lancaster Circuit.

The Church in Galena had grown finely during Mr. Phelps's pastorate. He had lived in the atmosphere of a perpetual revival. His congregations had been very large. He had made numerous friends, and become much attached to that locality. The atmosphere was bracing, and the scenery romantic. He loved

his Galena home. The people almost idolized him as their pastor. His term had expired—the Church commanded, and he must enter anew upon the responsible position of presiding elder. He loved the pastorate, because it brought him quiet and rest at home in the bosom of his affectionate family. He could labor to better advantage when relieved from anxiety about the dear home circle. But he loved the Church better than home, friends, family,—and cheerfully accepted, for the third time, the responsibilities of the eldership in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

CHAPTER NINTH.

THIRD TERM IN THE ELDERSHIP—ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT.

Rock Island City—Black Hawk—Preachers of his District—Resides at Princeton—Delegates to the General Conference—Discussion with Rev. Oliver Barr—Subsequent Correspondence—Preached for Rev. H. J. Humphrey—Death of Mrs. G. L. S. Stuff—Quarterly-meeting in Lafayette—Sermon on Baptism—Elder Gross—Sermon on Baptism at Galesburg—President Blanchard in Tears—Sketches of Sermons.

THE Rock Island District then extended from the Mississippi River to the Illinois. Rock Island City was a growing town, of considerable importance. The locality was rendered famous by the persistent refusal of Black Hawk to vacate it for the use of the white man. The old chief loved his home very dearly, no doubt; but the tides of civilization swept on, and bore him and his wasting tribe west of the Father of Waters. Emigrants poured into the great Mississippi Valley, and swarmed into the river towns and the groves along tributary streams.

It was truly an inviting field of labor to a

man who was willing to endure hardships for the cause of Christ. In many portions of the district the settlements were heavy; in other portions it was still almost a wilderness.

A. E. Phelps was appointed to the Rock Island District. It comprised thirteen pastoral charges. George L. S. Stuff was at Rock Island; Benjamin Applebee, at Moline; Matthew Hanna, at Union Grove; J. H. D. Moore, at Prophetstown; Martin P. Sweet, at Princeton Mission; Lorenzo Whipple, at Dover; Troy Grove Mission, Don Alonzo Faulkenbury; Henry, J. C. Pinkard, and S. B. Baker; Lafayette, Christopher Lazenby and William Calhoon; Wethersfield, Justus M. Hinman; Swede Mission, J. J. Hedstrom, A. Errickson, and A. G. Swedeborg; New Boston, John Morey; Camden, John Grundy.

Elder Phelps decided to locate his family at Princeton. He moved his goods in wagons. It was rainy, and his furniture, carpets, and bedding were much injured. He purchased a house on Main Street. Princeton was then a growing town, principally noted as the home of Hon. Owen Lovejoy. The people were intelligent and thrifty. The locality was well chosen as the head-quarters of Rock Island District. He opened his work on the district

with much zeal. He had been elected delegate to General Conference, to meet at Boston, Mass., May 1, 1852. Richard Haney, S. P. Keyes, Luke Hitchcock, and John Chandler were his associate delegates. All were presiding elders except Stephen P. Keyes, who was pastor of the Clark Street Church, Chicago. The time between the session of the Rock River Conference and the General Conference in May was crowded with work.

On October 29, 1851, he met Rev. Oliver Barr,* of the New Light or Christian Church, at Blackberry, Illinois. Mr. Barr was a prominent man in his denomination, and popular with the people in that vicinity. He was courteous and gentlemanly. His vocal organs gave out, and Mr. Phelps pursued the discussion of the subject alone, to an excited audience. Further discussion was then postponed to such a time as would enable Mr. Barr to resume.

This introduction to the correspondence in the Winter and Spring, on the same subject, will render the exchange of letters, here inserted, transparent to the reader.

* Rev. Oliver Barr had challenged Rev. Seymour Stover to debate doctrinal differences, and he called upon Elder Phelps to represent our Church.

"AURORA, KANE COUNTY, ILL., February 4, 1852.

"REV. A. E. PHELPS,—*Dear Sir*: It was mutually agreed between us, at the close of the discussion at Blackberry, Kane County, last Fall, that when my vocal organs (which unfortunately failed at that time) became sufficiently restored, so that I could hope to proceed with our discussion, I was to give you notice of the fact, and then you were to decide the time when the discussion should be resumed at Henry, Marshall County, Ill. I now inform you that I will be ready to resume the discussion at the time you appoint,—only informing you that I am much from home, and requesting that you will fix the time so that I may have due notice and sufficient time to reach the appointed place. As we are already admonished that my enfeebled vocal organs may possibly fail again, I will give you the assurance of furnishing a worthy and responsible substitute, to speak at such a time or times as I may not be able. Hence each affirmative may choose his own time of closing on *this* proposition. With the hopeful assurance that the discussion will proceed without interruption to a satisfactory issue, Mr. Worley will bear this to you and receive your answer, which he will forward to me. With sentiments of high esteem, I am

"Yours, respectfully, OLIVER BARR."

"PRINCETON, ILL., February 26, 1852.

"REV. OLIVER BARR,—*Dear Sir*: Having this moment received your letter of the 4th inst., I sit down immediately to return an answer. I had long looked for such a communication from you, until I had almost despaired of receiving one. I very much

regret that it has been so long delayed, as it will now be impracticable for me to enter into such a discussion till after our General Conference; and hence it must be deferred until at least the middle, or perhaps the 20th, of June. My engagements are now such that I can not redeem time for that purpose before leaving for the East, about the middle of April. My quarterly-meeting for the Henry Circuit will be on the 19th and 20th of June, and I will engage to meet you on the 22d, in Henry, if the Lord permits. Yours, in haste.

“A. E. PHELPS.

“P. S. Please write me at this place, and let me know whether the time will suit you; that is, the 22d of June next. A. E. P.”

“AURORA, March 3, 1852.

“REV. A. E. PHELPS,—*Dear Sir*: Your favor of the 26th ult. came to hand this day, and I hasten to respond. In reference to the discussion at Henry you say, “I will engage to meet you on the 22d of June, in Henry, if the Lord permit.” I accept that time, and, if no providence prevents, will *then* and *there* enter upon the discussion, and pursue it to your satisfaction, or till all the propositions have been duly investigated,—only reserving that when my organs are incompetent for speaking I will employ a proxy. Before my organs had obtained sufficient strength for continued speaking, I was called off by our ‘Corresponding Secretary,’ into Indiana and Ohio, on the duties of my agency, and did not return till a few days before I addressed my note to you. This was my reason for not writing sooner.

As an agent I can not control my own time. To-morrow I leave for the North-west.

“Very respectfully, yours, OLIVER BARR.”

He spent much of his time in the Winter in revival meetings in his district. He was sent for to aid Rev. H. J. Humphrey at Hennepin, in Peoria District. While here, he preached a powerful sermon against the doctrine of unconditional salvation, which excited much discussion, and which will be noticed hereafter.

During his quarterly-meeting at New Boston, he found the Church in the midst of a revival meeting. The Spiritualists were doing all within their power to break up the meeting. The dancing-school, then in full blast, heartily seconded these efforts, and the meeting was seriously hindered. John Morey was pastor at that time. He says “He preached five sermons that surpassed any thing I ever heard from the pulpit. His whole soul seemed to flow out in his eloquent utterances.” The opposition to the meeting withered under these sermons.

Early in the Spring Rev. G. L. S. Stuff was called upon to bury his wife. The account given, in his own handwriting, by Elder Phelps will be interesting to all who read it. It is a touching tribute to a humble Christian woman

who shared the labors of an itinerant preacher. The Church of Wesley and Asbury has had many such noble women, and has them yet. God bless them! He says:

“She was the daughter of Peter and Harriet White, and born in the State of New York, August 7, 1825, and was married to her now bereaved husband at Green Bay, February 18, 1845. She embraced religion, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church in the seventeenth year of her age. Her early Christian experience was peaceful and triumphant. For the past few years it was one of severe conflict with the powers of darkness. She was subject to the most distressing fears and temptations on the subject of her acceptance with God. A few weeks before her death, after a long and painful struggle, Jacob-like she prevailed. The Angel of the Covenant revealed his lovely face. Her husband entering her room at the close of this contest, she remarked, ‘I have gained the victory,’ and then added, ‘I have reason to praise the Lord for his afflicting rod, as it has led me into such light and peace. I can now claim Jesus as my entire Savior. I feel that he owns me for his child. I am enabled to give all up into his hands.’ And then she sang distinctly:

“What is this that steals upon my frame?

Is it death, is it death?

If this be death I soon shall be.

From every pain and sorrow free.”

“A few days after, she said to Sister Spencer: ‘I enjoy sweet communion with my Savior.’

“‘Dear Savior let they beauties be
My soul's eternal food;
And grace command my heart away
From all created good.’

“On the afternoon of the day before her death, she suffered severely, and indeed all night more or less; she remarked in the night that her end was rapidly approaching. She wished to converse with her husband on some particular subjects, but was too much exhausted. In the morning the doctor was called. She inquired if she was dying. He told her she was near her end. She was calm and happy. She said, ‘Doctor, seek the Lord and prepare for heaven. Nothing but the consolation of religion can sustain in such an hour as this.’” She then gave some special directions to her husband in relation to their only little daughter, some five or six years old. Finding her strength fast failing her, she called her dear little Mary to her, and in the most affecting and touching manner gave her her dying charge, and pronounced upon her a mother's blessing. She said to her weeping husband, ‘Tell my father for his dying child, to live for heaven as though he were now dying. Tell my brothers to seek the Lord in their youth.’ She then expired without a struggle or a groan. Her end was as calm as the unruffled lake at Summer's eve. An angelic smile rested upon her features when the spirit had fled to the bosom of the Redeemer. Thus peacefully she went down into the ‘valley of the shadow of death,’ for the Shepherd of Israel was with her. Sister Stuff, taken every way, was a most amiable woman. She possessed a meek and quiet spirit; modest and rather self suspecting, but of rare personal, domestic,

and social excellences. She was at once the affectionate wife, the tender mother, the obliging neighbor, and faithful Christian. She drank deeply into the spirit of the itinerant work. She was ready to go to any missionary field to which her husband might have been appointed. She felt a deep and lively interest in all the benevolent operations of the Church. She laid her all upon its altar."

On March 22d and 23d he held quarterly-meeting at Lafayette, Ill. On Sabbath evening he preached on the subject of Baptism. Elder Gross, of the Baptist Church, a strong man and an eloquent speaker, and an able defender of immersion, was present. Mr. Phelps showed that the meaning of baptize was not favorable to immersion. He said James Armstrong, of Indiana, once saw a mother weep whilst her child was baptized. At the close of the meeting he asked her why she wept at the administration of so solemn an ordinance? Was it because it was done by sprinkling? "Oh," she replied, "that is the Scriptural mode." "Oh no," said Mr. Armstrong, "the Bible is full of immersion." "Why, Mr. Armstrong, the word immerse is not in the Bible." After examining the Bible a while, he said: "Oh, this is a Methodist Bible." He then went home and examined his own Bible and then gave up.

Mr. Phelps showed that the ancients did not render baptize by the word immerse, but either transferred it untranslated or used the word *katadeno*, "to wet, to wet much." The sermon was able and comprehensive.

Elder Gross replied. He denied that the "three thousand" were baptized on the day of Pentecost. He "believed they were admitted to Church fellowship that day." To which Mr. Phelps quickly responded, "Then they were admitted without baptism, brother Gross."

It was not a pleasant task for him to antagonize the doctrinal views of sister Churches, yet he was frequently compelled to do this. On one occasion he was invited by President Jonathan Blanchard, of Knox College, to preach in the Old First Church, on the "Subjects and Mode of Baptism." There had been much discussion of the subject for several months. A prominent minister of the Baptist Church had made some proselytes to his faith, and had annoyed the pædo-baptists not a little by his assumptions, and his earnest advocacy of exclusive immersion. The Church was filled to its utmost capacity. Mr. Phelps preached with great ability on the subject. At the close of the second discourse he requested the choir

to allow him the privilege of singing the closing hymn, which was cheerfully granted, and he sang :

“How painfully pleasing the fond recollection
Of youthful connections and innocent joy,” etc.

Then the chorus—

“The old-fashioned Bible, the dear blessed Bible,
The family Bible that lay on the stand.”

Rev. Absalom Wooliscroft was present, and also Samuel Leeper, A. Abbott, and other lay singers. The effect was grand. In a moment the audience was bathed in tears. President Blanchard sat with head averted, whilst the tears ran freely down his cheeks. It was a moment never to be forgotten by those who were present. The audience had been wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement, and this unexpected appeal to the “tender recollections” of those who had enjoyed an early Christian training completely overcame them. Mr. Phelps was a *very sweet* singer. It will be remembered that his father was a music teacher, from whom he inherited a fine taste, and also acquired some knowledge of the art.

Mr. Phelps prepared full notes of sermons for use on his district, but seldom spoke from notes. When he did, his outline was brief and

comprehensive. The sketches here inserted were used late in life. They were designed simply for his own prompting, and not for general criticism. These "skeletons" are compact and comprehensive. Mr. Phelps was a *thinker*. He made himself master of the subject in hand. He made constant use of the Bible. The testimony of Scriptures is too frequently omitted by ministers of the present day in the presentation of the general teachings of same. Another feature of his preaching, worthy of note and imitation, was his habit of *expounding* the *Word*. He was mighty in the Scriptures. The following outlines of sermons very imperfectly represent his ability as a preacher; still they will be read with interest by old friends.

"ZECHARIAH ix, 9-12.—Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Jerusalem," etc.

These words apply first to the Jewish nation. "He came to his own, but his own received him not." Secondly, to the Church. The king here spoken of is Christ Jesus, who "is Lord of Lords and king of kings." That this text applies to Christ is evident, first, from the public entry of Christ into Jerusalem riding upon the animal mentioned here, attended by the multitude, crying, "Hosannah to the son of David. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Secondly, the evangelists all apply these words to him.

The points presented to view in this text:

1. The character of the king. "He is just." Here the word "just" implies righteous. Righteous in his own character, righteous in his moral government, and righteous in that great system of Christianity he introduced. It produces righteousness or holiness in men, and this fits them for the presence and enjoyment of a holy God. •

2. The spiritual nature of his kingdom. The manner of his public entry of Jerusalem showed that he was a king. The animal on which he rode, his entering the temple and taking possession, and at night retiring into privacy for prayer, all show that his kingdom was not of the world.

3. The extent of his kingdom. "From sea even to sea." The uttermost parts of the earth were to be his possessions. The stone cut out of the mountains without hands was to fill the whole earth.

"Now we are ambassadors for Christ."—2 COR. v, 20.

An ambassador is a public functionary sent from one sovereign power to another for the transaction of some official business, affecting the interest of the commonwealth he represents. Sent out either to negotiate a peace between contending parties or to perpetuate friendly relations already existing, and to encourage commercial intercourse. Christ's ministers, that are called and commissioned of him, are plenipotentiaries, divine legates of the skies, ambassadors of God, heaven's commissioned officers, sent forth to propose terms of peace and salvation to a guilty world.

I. The text presupposes that mankind was in a

state of enmity to God. This the Scriptures assert directly in numberless passages. The whole scheme of human redemption, the whole Gospel system, teaches the same by necessary implication, as the great design of the whole was to restore man to God's forfeited favor and image, and reconcile earth and heaven.

II. The reconciliation proposed. This implies three things: 1. Reconciliation to the terms of pardon and salvation. 2. To the moral government of God. 3. To his providential dispensation.

III. The exhortation, "As though God did beseech you." What infinite condescension. The judge tenders a free and full pardon to the guilty culprit,—the offended sovereign to the condemned rebel. The injured *creditor* forgives the debtor the whole debt. Not only is pardon freely tendered, but the offender is urged and besought to accept it.

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold."—REV. iii, 18.

Most men desire to be rich, at least they would esteem it a convenience, if it could be enjoyed without endangering the soul or the interests of religion. Here wealth that is incorruptible and that fadeth not away is offered to all men by him who has said, "The gold and the silver are mine."

I. The characters addressed,—the Church at Laodicea. They thought themselves rich and had need of nothing, but in reality were "poor, blind, and naked." How deplorable and indescribably distressing their condition.

II. The blessings offered—grace, holiness, and spiritual illumination. Gold tried in the fire, fully

purified and separated from an alloy, gold refined in the furnace. This may represent the faith of the Christian, that is more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, or perhaps the grace of God, that renews and purifies the heart.

WHITE RAIMENT—HOLINESS OF LIFE.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."—EPH. iii, 20.

This epistle was written while a prisoner at Rome awaiting his trial for life. The prayer that precedes this text is a dedication prayer, not of the church at Ephesus merely, but of the Christian Church. "Now unto him," an expression of dignity, marking the supreme majesty and magnitude of Jehovah. He does not say to God or the Lord, but "unto him," to give prominence to his character. "Unto him," that being of beings, the fountain of all perfection and excellence. The majesty and perfection of his character should awe us into reverence in our approaches to him.

"That is able to do." He had just presented the most comprehensive petitions and enlarged requests for blessings so exalted that some might doubt whether they could be attained in this life. To remove all doubt and give full confidence, he fixes attention on the omnipotent power and perfection of God. "He is able to do exceeding abundantly." All power is his; his power gave existence to the universe and perpetuates its being. "He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast." "The thunder of his power who can understand?" He is able to accomplish for us all he has promised.

He commands us to be holy, has made provisions for it and promised it, and hence will do it. And yet more exceedingly abundantly beyond our most exalted and extended conceptions of the mind. Nothing within the whole of our salvation and personal holiness too great for him to bestow. "According to the power that worketh in us." Here is the proof. The pardon of sin, the regeneration of the heart, its subjugation to Christ are demonstrations that the same powerful agency can destroy all sin, perfect in love, and fill the soul with peace and every virtue.

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our professions."—HEB. iv. 14.

Most men in every age and country have felt the need of some meritorious medium of approach to God. Personal guilt and depravity demand such a medium. The pagan finds this medium in his sacrifices, sometimes the fruit of his body; the deluded Romanist in the intercession of saints; the Protestant in the advocacy of Christ. The sacerdotal office is twofold: first, to offer sacrifice; second, to make intercession. Christ performed the first on earth. Heb. ix, 14, 26, 28; Heb. 10, 12, 14. The second in heaven.

The second branch of the priestly office demands our present attention. This we have said is intercession. "He ever (himself) liveth to make intercessions for them." The death of Christ is the procuring cause of our salvation with all temporal and spiritual good. His intercession secures us possession. All need his intercession, for all have sinned, all are depraved. None possess absolute perfection.

I. He pleads for sinners, to spare their lives. Sin forfeits probationary existence. "The soul that sinneth it shall die;" but Christ pleads, the sinner lives. He pleads for spiritual influences and the means of grace. Justice cries, "Let him alone." Christ intercedes, and the Spirit still strives; ministers invite; the Gospel proposes life.

II. For believers. 1. For the acceptance with the Father. "No man can come unto the Father but by me." "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. ii, 18.) 2. For the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. "I will pray to the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." (John xiv, 16.) 3. For grace to help in time of need." (Heb. iv, 15, 16.) 4. For peace. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv, 7; John xiv, 13, 14.) 5. Preservation from sin. 6. Sanctification. 7. Union. 8. Glorification. John xvii, 9-24.

III. How does he intercede? First. He appears in our own humanity before the throne for us. Heb. ix, 24. Second. Presents the marks of his crucifixion. Rev. v, 6; Heb. xii, 29. Third. Most likely his intercessions were vocal. John xvii; Psalm ii. "Father forgive them."

But what are his qualifications for intercession? First. Wisdom. Jude 25; Col. ii, 3. Second. Influence—equal with God. Third. Sympathy. Heb. ii, 17, 18; Heb. iv, 15.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."—I COR. i, 30.

The moral condition of man while unrenewed is distinguished by four prominent evils:

1. *Ignorance of God.* "The world by wisdom knew not God." (I Cor. i, 22.)

2. *Sin.* "All have sinned." (Rom. iii, 23.)

3. *Depravity.* "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. vi, 5; Isa. i, 5, 6.)

4. *Mortality.* "For as in Adam all die." (I Cor. xv, 22; Heb. ix, 27.)

We have in Christ a full remedy for the whole,—his own wisdom to dispel our ignorance and moral darkness; our righteousness to make us free from sin, our sanctification to purge our depravity, and our redemption from the grave to swallow up death in victory. Isa. ii, 5-8; Hosea xiii, 14.

First. Christ is made unto us wisdom. All correct religious experience and practice are based upon truth; truth which proud boasting philosophy and science could never reach; the volume of nature could never disclose it, but Christ has revealed it. He is the way, the truth, and the life. John xiv, 6. He has revealed this truth in his Word and by his Spirit, and hence is our wisdom. In his Word he has taught us our origin, nature, and destination; our depravity, guilt, danger, and remedy. The plan of salvation, terms of acceptance, extent of moral obligation, and the way to heaven, by his Spirit upon the heart. Luke xxiv, 45; Acts xvi, 14. Compare John i, 9, with John xvi, 7, 8.

"Secondly. He is our righteousness. How guilt

and sin can be removed and the sinner accepted and made righteous before God, are questions of the deepest interest; questions that the literature and the unassisted reason of man could never answer, but all find an answer in the text. Christ is our righteousness—remission of sins is through him. Luke xxiv, 47; Acts x, 45; Acts xiii, 39; xvi, 31.

Thirdly. He is our sanctification. Man is guilty and needs pardon; his nature is depraved and corrupt, and needs sanctification. Rom. vii, 14; xxiii, 24. He is our sanctification. Rom. viii, 2, 3. His death, an intercession, has made provision for this work. It is commenced in regeneration. This frees from guilt and the dominion of sin. It brings us into Christ and makes us new creatures. 2 Cor. v, 17; Gal. vi, 15. It is completed when the heart is cleansed from all sin. 1 John i, 7-9; 1 Thes. v, 2, 3.

Fourth. And redemption from all the power of Satan and the grave.

“But be sure your sin will find you out.” NUM. xxxii, 23.

Most men are sensible that sin is an evil that exposes the offender to punishment and final exclusion from the divine presence; yet multitudes live in sin and risk the consequences. Some do not stop to count the cost; they never look to the final issue or result of their course. Dazzled by the pleasures that sin promises, allured by the fascinations of vice, they rush onward as the unthinking horse into the battlefield. Others intend repentance and reformation before death. They promise themselves long life; they will first enjoy the world, try its pleasures, share its amusements and amass its treasures, and then before death they will fly from impending ruin and prepare

for their future state. Others have died young, it is true, but *they* will live to be old. Some have died suddenly, unprepared, but they will have timely warning. Many have died delirious, but they will be more fortunate. Men generally enter upon the grosser immoralities or atrocities of life under a presumptuous confidence of secresy; though others have failed they intend to manage the card with so much ingenuity and shrewdness as altogether to escape detection. Such crimes seek concealment; they are the offspring of darkness, and can not endure the light. They hang out no signs and never advertise. But however hidden, concealed, and secret such deed of darkness are, they will all be brought to light. "Your sins will find you out." They are all chronicled by the pen of Divine Justice, and heaven's commissioned officer is on the track of every sinner; no retreat so private and dark as to conceal from his view. All such deeds shall come to the light. Sin shall find the sinner out first in the natural and legitimate consequences. This is done in this life. Though the present is a probationary state and not a state of retribution, yet intemperance will destroy health, degrade the mind and body, and bring disgrace and destitution. Gaming leads to other vices, and draws a thousand miseries in its train. Fortunes acquired by dishonesty and crime are generally fickle and unstable. All other sins have their influence both upon the general character and present happiness of the offender. But should men given to flagrant crimes escape public exposure in this life? Their sins at least will overtake them in death and the final judgment in their full weight of retribution.

CHAPTER TENTH.

THE BOSTON GENERAL CONFERENCE—CORRESPONDENCE.

Started April 22d—Preached in Boston April 30th—Death of Bishop Hedding—Absence of Bishop Hamline—Opening of the Conference—Petitions—First Letter to his Wife—Second Letter to Wife—Third Letter to Wife—Fourth Letter—Fifth Letter—Brief Letter to Rev. J. Morey.

GENERAL Conference was now close at hand. Mr. Phelps began to make preparations for his journey. This was no small task. The affairs of his family and district must be carefully arranged, so as not to suffer in his absence. On April 14th he wrote: "All are well. Would like to have Elizabeth [sister-in-law] come on the stage to Princeton. Must start to the General Conference on 22d of April. Emma talks, and is as smart as a cricket and playful as a lamb."

He reached Boston on Friday, April 30th, and found the hills covered with snow.* "Bishop Hedding is dead, Bishop Hamline

* A letter to John Morey.

unable to be here. The Bishops recommend the election of three more."

The Conference met in the Bloomfield Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Waugh read the Scriptures—announced the two hundred and sixteenth hymn:

"Now, Lord, fulfill thy faithful word,
Thy servants' labors bless;
Now let the prayer of faith be heard,
And grant them full success."

After the singing, Laban Clark and Jacob Young led in prayer.

"Jesus, the word of mercy give,
And let it swiftly run;
And let the priests themselves believe,
And put salvation on,"

was sung. Peter Cartwright and Charles Adams led in prayer.

Bishops Morris and Janes were present.

There were many "appeals," and many petitions to extend the pastoral term, to abolish the presiding elder's office, and to cut off all slaveholders from the Church.

Mr. Phelps was on the Committee on Itinerancy, also on the Committee on Revisals. R. Haney was on the Episcopal Committee; L. Hitchcock was on the Mission Committee; J. Chandler was on the Committee on Boundaries; S. P. Keyes was on the Committee on

Book Concern. II. Summers, then of the Wisconsin Conference, was also on the Committee on Boundaries. Mr. Phelps was associated with C. C. Bohr, Heman Bangs, Adam Poe, J. B. Corrington, Miner Raymond, among the number composing the Committee on the Itinerancy. Among the number on "Revisals" with whom he was associated he met George Peck, S. G. J. Worthington, H. Summers, E. Thomson, W. H. Goode, Peter Akers, J. Havens, F. Hodgson, J. M'Clintock, J. Porter, and other able men.

Mr. Phelps was no speech-maker in the General Conference, but a very active and able member. His letters to his companion, though not designed for general perusal, present a pretty full outline of its proceedings. These letters are written in the style of an affectionate and thoughtful husband, to whom home was the dearest place.

"BOSTON, MASS., May 1, 1852.

"MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—I am now in the far-famed 'City of Notions,' and it is Saturday night. I sit down in the midst of company to drop you a brief line. Never before was I so far from the objects of my affections. Already do I think much about 'sweet home,' and long to be there; but I must suppress my sighs and sobs for the present, and tell

a little about my journey to this Yankee land. We took the railroad, at Chicago, that runs through Northern Indiana and Southern Michigan; thence to Lake Erie, below Detroit; thence by boat to Buffalo. The journey would have been pleasant but for the fact that our iron horse broke down the first night, and detained us some hours; and the steamboat got her boiler crippled twice, and detained us again some hours. The harbor at Buffalo was gorged with ice for a great distance, and we were told repeatedly we could not make the port; but we did, without much delay. We arrived there on Wednesday night, and on Thursday visited the Falls of Niagara, and spent some hours in looking at the most astonishing wonders of nature ever beheld by man. No tongue or pen can describe the grandeur and awful sublimity of the scenery; hence I shall not attempt it. We traveled on foot some three or four miles, viewing different portions of the Falls, or the same from different positions, ascending and descending steps almost perpendicular; one flight of steps, in particular, no less than two hundred and ninety in number; scrambling over steep precipices and rugged rocks, until we were almost sick with fatigue. We then took the cars and returned to Buffalo, and set out there to Albany at five P. M.; traveled all night, and arrived in Albany early yesterday morning, and in Boston in the afternoon. The cars now run from Buffalo to Albany in twelve hours, whereas they were twenty-four hours running the same distance when you and I came over the road. The speed is still greater from Albany to Boston; it really seems like flying upon the wings of the wind.

“Conference organized this morning. Most of the members are in. Bishop Hamline is not here; and it is doubtful whether he will be here at all, on account of his health. You have heard, I presume, of the death of Bishop Hedding. My boarding-place is pleasant, about three-quarters of a mile from the Conference-room, in a Methodist family. I shall have coffee once a day, and that will do very well. Boston is a crowded and wealthy city, though I have not had time to see much of it yet. I will now close for to-night, and finish this epistle Monday morning.

“It is now Monday morning, May 3d, and I proceed to finish my letter. My health has been very poor ever since I came to the city. I attribute it mainly to too much exercise at the Falls, and then getting into the cars and traveling all night, without sleeping more than five minutes during the night. The next evening—that is, on Friday evening last—we arrived here. I was taken, before I got out of the cars, with a sick stomach and dizziness, such as I had in Galena, so that I could scarcely ride in a carriage to my boarding-place, and have not yet fully recovered, though I made out to get to the Conference-room on Saturday, and to Church yesterday. The Methodist churches in this city are fine, and furnished with fine organs and choirs, but the old land-marks of Methodism are hard to find. The old elm-tree, under which Jesse Lee preached his first sermon in Boston, stands pretty much on my road from my lodging to the Conference-room. I look upon it almost with idolatrous veneration. I have ordered the *Daily* sent to George; if it should not

come, let me know. I have found another little 'Emma' where I board, about two years old; her name is Emma Isabelle, but I am not willing to accept her as a substitute for my sweet Emma. Oh, how I want to see her! Could I see her this morning, I think I would almost smash her bones.

"George, try and be a good boy; be punctual to your business, and attend well to the wants and comforts of your mother. Mary and Joseph, be good children, and don't forget your prayers. I am looking with great anxiety for a letter from you; be sure to write every week.

"Most affectionately, yours,

"A. E. PHELPS."

Overwork was a fault with Elder Phelps. His desire for education and his love for the Master led him to attempt impossibilities. Absence from his family, added to exhaustive labors, depressed him. He performed the work committed to his hands, regardless of the effects upon his already overtaxed system.

"BOSTON, May 8, 1852,

MY DEAR WIFE,—Having some ten minutes leisure, I take up my pen to commence a letter to you that I shall probably finish next week. I feel sometimes almost discouraged on account of my health. I have not enjoyed one day's health since I arrived in the city. Before reaching my residence I was taken with a dizziness and sick stomach, such as I had in Galena, and had to go to bed immediately,

and ate nothing till next day. I have suffered more or less in the same way ever since, but have still been able to attend to business, until yesterday afternoon. I was taken so bad as to have to be brought home by the kindness of some of the brethren. I went to bed as sick as you ever saw me, and am still unwell, but some better. My work has been unusually heavy since Conference commenced; I am on two of the most important committees in the Conference, besides two sub-committees. The brethren tell me my energies have been overtaxed, and that I must labor less. I have now to start out in the country, to preach to-morrow, by special request; the carriage is waiting for me. I preferred riding out a few miles for my health, rather than to preach in the city.

“The State of Massachusetts is certainly the roughest and most broken and rocky country I ever saw. The soil looks like *death* and *starvation*. The hills were pretty generally covered with snow. But all is activity and bustle in Boston. You can scarcely form any idea of the noise and stir in the principal streets in the city. Pittsburg was no comparison. The streets are very narrow, and literally jammed full of omnibuses, hacks, carriages, drays, etc., driving as hard as they can go, and consequently you can not hear yourself halloo. The noise I should think equal to the roar of the battle-field. I shall be glad to get away from this scene of confusion and thunder.

“I received George’s letter on Tuesday last, and a welcome visitor it was. Oh, how glad I was to hear from you all, and especially to hear that you

were all well! Thank the Lord for it; may he preserve your lives and health till my return. I think but few men have as strong domestic feelings and attachments as I have. Many of the delegates have now been from home more than a month, and I think would be satisfied to stay away two or three months yet. I am differently constituted.

"We will elect at least three more bishops. Dr. Simpson, the editor of the *Western Christian Advocate*, I think, will be one. There is much electioneering, and a great many very friendly and sociable men these times. I am disgusted at such a practice; we have certainly departed from the spirit of our fathers.

"I took a walk the other evening down to the boat-landing, to see the place where our fathers of 1776 threw the tea into the water that brought about the American Revolution. I can see the Bunker Hill monument at a distance, but have not had time to visit it yet.

"Store goods by the retail seem to be as high here as with us, hence I shall not purchase much. Carriages, also, I believe, are as high as in Chicago.

"It is now Monday evening, May 10th, and I have but a moment or two to write. On Saturday, brother and sister Wales came in for me to go out and spend the Sabbath with them and preach at West Newton, a village of some two thousand population. They took me to the Bunker Hill Monument; it stands on a high hill, and is two hundred and twenty feet high above the ground, and we ascended by winding steps, two hundred and ninety-five in number. As I stood upon the top of it and looked down,

a man seemed to be about as big as our little Emma. They also took me to the navy-yard, where I saw a thousand curiosities that I have not time to name. They then took me to the far-famed Cambridge College, where Professor Webster was hung and where little Safford is receiving his education; thence to Mount Auburn, and rambled for some time among the tombs of the great and honorable. Mount Auburn is no doubt the most beautiful and costly cemetery in America. I should like to spend days in such a place. I preached twice yesterday and feel better to-day.

"I received a letter this morning from your father. Please send him some of the first numbers of your *Daily*, if you have read them. Be sure to write punctually every week. You can not tell the pleasure it affords me to get your letters. Have George to write, and write yourself. I hardly know how to close. I wish my paper was larger. Kiss my children for me.

"Your husband,

A. E. PHELPS."

Several appeal cases came before the Conference on Saturday, May 7th. One was referred to the Committee on Itinerancy, with instructions for it to make a special report. This Committee was severely taxed in order carefully to consider each case. A case from Erie Conference was reaffirmed by a vote of 110 to 37. These cases were a severe tax on the committees and sub-committees to whom they were referred.

BOSTON, MASS, May 12, 1852.

“MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—As I have a moment of leisure this evening, I will commence another epistle to you, and write it by piecemeal as I can. I received George’s letter to-day, and a very interesting letter it was. It affords me indescribable pleasure to hear from you and the children; and especially from my sweet Emma. Her little form has been before my eyes a thousand times since I left home. I sometimes can almost imagine I have her in my arms, clasping her to my bosom.

“Bishop Hamline has resigned his episcopal office; he is no longer bishop, but has become as another man; it is now Elder Hamline. My old friend Ames, of Indiana, I think may possibly be elected bishop. I hope he may. Kossuth is in the city. I hope to hear him on Friday night. Conference moves very slowly indeed.

“You need not look for me home before the middle of June, though I assure you I shall come as soon as possible. My boarding-house is pleasant; the family is kind. I get coffee in the morning, but have to drink a great deal of water for a little coffee. The Yankees can not make coffee.

“Tell Mary and Jody to write a few lines to me in George’s letter. When you write again tell me what to get for Jody. I don’t know what pretty thing to buy for him, unless it is a *little switch*. I have got nothing yet for my little Emma. I shall have to give myself to her.

“Several lines of railroad pass within a few feet of our door. On yesterday they were passing and the cars ran over a horse and buggy and crushed the

buggy into splinters, and ground the horse into mince-meat. No person was in the buggy at the time.

"This afternoon Bishop Waugh preached the funeral sermon of Bishop Hedding. It was a very affecting and impressive discourse, and a time of great interest.

"When I think of staying here three or four weeks yet, it makes me feel almost sick. I could wish the time was out. To-morrow I am invited to an oyster dinner. We have some luxuries here that you do not enjoy, such as oysters, clams, lobsters, etc.

"It is now Saturday afternoon, May 15th, and I resume my pen to finish my letter. Since writing the above Conference has done nothing but try a very exciting appeal case from Ohio. Every thing moves slowly. We have so many splendid speakers that much time is consumed in making speeches merely, it would seem, to have them reported.

"I had the pleasure on yesterday evening of hearing a speech from the illustrious Kossuth, in the far-famed Faneuil Hall. The hall and galleries, I should think, would contain three or four thousand people. And it was crowded almost to suffocation. The splendid chandelier contained perhaps a hundred glass lamps, in the middle of the hall, lighting up the house as bright as day. Kossuth spoke about an hour, during which time the large concourse was held in breathless attention, except their occasional shouts, like peals of thunder. Never did I see such a spirit of enthusiasm, and so much excitement. He is certainly a fine speaker for a foreigner. He speaks the English language quite intelligibly. His personal

appearance is fine. He came into the house accompanied by his suite, some of them in splendid military uniform.

"The mayor of the city has invited our Conference to take a ride, on next Tuesday, a few miles into the great Atlantic, to some neighboring islands. It will be a pleasant excursion if the day is fair.

"I noticed, in one of the old churches in this city, the other day, a cannon-ball, shot by the British in the Revolution. The ball, I should think, is a seventy-four pounder. About one-half of it is buried in the wall of the church; the other half sticks out, just as it was shot from the British cannon.

"Boston is a city in the midst of an assemblage of cities; there are some five or six that may be seen from the top of Bunker Hill Monument. There is Boston City, where the Conference is held, East Boston, South Boston, Cambridge, Charlestown, and Roxbury; some six cities within the circumference of the eye. I have an appointment for South Boston to-morrow.

"I believe that I might possibly secure an appointment to the Book Agency, if I would try as others are trying, but I am heartily disgusted with such efforts; and then I believe it would be better for me to remain in the regular work—hence I shall seek nothing else. I believe God has called me to the work of the ministry, but not to be seeking for offices or fat livings.

"It has been rainy and cold for nearly a week. I do not wonder that men die of consumption in this place. The changes in the weather are sudden, and the sea breezes very cold and penetrating. In

addition to oysters, lobsters, etc., I have had the finest fresh fish that I ever ate.

“*May 17th.* It is now Monday morning, and I arise to finish my letter. I hope to receive yours to-day. Be sure to write every Monday. I preached once on yesterday, and declined a second invitation. If George could be here, his taste for music and choir singing would be gratified, as there are choirs and organs in all the churches. The music itself is fine, but there is very little religion in it. Religion and the worship of God seem to be but a secondary object. Could the children be with me here, I could show them a thousand curiosities, and pretty things of all descriptions; but I can not tell them now. I see thousands of little boys and girls going to school every day, and playing along the streets as they go, but I never yet have seen any of them quarreling or fighting. The little boys are not so naughty in Boston as they are in Illinois.

“May the Lord bless you, my dear Charlotte, and all the children, is my daily prayer.

“Your affectionate husband,

“A. E. PHELPS.”

Mr. Phelps possessed an intense love of the beautiful; he was also very patriotic, and a close observer. He found much to interest him in the city of Boston and its vicinity. The enjoyment of these opportunities he shared with his family in Princeton, Ill.; and thus the reader is enabled to participate in the same, in the perusal of his home correspondence.

“BOSTON, May 19, 1852.

“MY DEAR WIFE AND CHILDREN,—When far away from home, it is a great privilege to talk with you by means of paper and ink. It affords me, therefore, great pleasure to write; and while doing so I almost imagine myself seated in your midst, with my children around me, and sweet Emma on my knee.

“Never did I see a Conference progress as slowly in business as this has done, and if we continue to move at this rate we will be here till July; but if the Lord permit I shall try hard to be at home on the evening of the 12th of June.

“On yesterday afternoon the whole Conference, in company with many more, about five or six hundred in all, took a delightful excursion on a steamboat, among the islands of the harbor and bay, and out to the opening of the wide Atlantic Ocean. We passed Fort Independence, with her heavy cannon pointing at us, just ready to pour her deafening thunder upon any ships of war that might attempt to approach the city. We then sailed to Fort Warren, about ten or twelve miles from Boston. There we all landed, and went through the fort and over the grounds. It covers an area of ground about a half a mile in circumference, and is so invulnerable that I apprehend all the naval forces of Europe combined could not demolish it or take it by storm. We there had a fine view of the wide waste of waters between Europe and us. The great Atlantic spread out its blue waters before us as far as the eye could see. After spending a half an hour there, we returned to Deer Island, five miles from the city, and

visited the hospital, a most stupendous building, with its hundreds of inmates. Never did I see as many poor, miserable, afflicted creatures before at one time. To go through the different apartments of the building, and see all the victims of disease and misfortune, you would think that nature had opened all her vials of wrath upon that community. In one story of the house there were hundreds of sick men; in another, nothing but women; and in a third, a mass of suffering children. In the large dining-hall the city authorities had prepared us a splendid supper, where we were treated with all the respect and attention imaginable. Never was a body of ministers in America treated with so much respect by the civil authorities as this General Conference. Yesterday was a great day with us all. All I wanted was to have you and the children with me, and my happiness would have been complete.

“George’s letter, dated the 10th, came to hand yesterday. I am sorry you had not yet received my letters; this is the fourth I have written since my arrival in Boston. I hope you have received them before now. The first week my health was very poor, but since then it has been good. I think riding in the cars made me sea-sick; I dread returning.

“I do not wonder that the people die in this country of consumption. Sudden changes in the weather here are more common than I have ever known in any other country. Hence, many of the women look like they had had the five-years’ ague. It is remarkable that the men here are generally handsome, neat, and trim, as though they had just come out of a band box; but the women are homely.

I have seen but very few handsome ladies in Boston. I think our 'Sucker' ladies will compare very favorably with those of Yankeedom.

"I now fear that my friend Ames can not be elected bishop, but Dr. Simpson, of Cincinnati, will be likely to succeed.

"Have Mary and Jody write a few lines to me in George's letter.

"I have seen but one 'Bloomer' since I came to Boston, and I suppose I have seen many thousands of ladies, young and old, in the streets and churches. The one that I saw to-day would hardly pass for a 'Bloomer,' as her dress came nearly to her feet. As vain as the ladies are here, they can not go the 'Bloomer.'

"We have secured a Book Depository and paper at Chicago. Our Conference has a special invitation to hear Daniel Webster speak in Faneuil Hall, on Saturday, at four P. M., but I have been engaged to go to the country and preach on the Sabbath, and therefore fear I can not hear him.

"There is great excitement about the election of our officers, such as bishops, editors, agents, etc.; but I thank the Lord I am not a candidate, and feel no ambition on the subject. When I write again the probability is I can report the new bishops, if not all the officers, as we have now determined to elect the bishops on next Tuesday.

"It is now Monday, May 24th. I heard Daniel Webster speak on Saturday in Faneuil Hall, I should think, to four thousand people. He is emphatically the idol of New England. I have returned home to-day quite unwell, scarcely able to be up. Conference

now begins to move on in a more business like manner. Some think we will adjourn by the 2d or 3d of June, but I think if we adjourn by Saturday night, the 5th of June, we will do well. I hope to be at home by the 12th of June. When I write again I can speak with more certainty about my return. I begin to sigh for home, 'sweet home.' Kiss my Emma for me, and tell the other children that I hope to see them soon.

"Yours,

A. E. PHELPS."

His joy on receiving a letter from home is remarkable, and gives emphasis to the remarks of one of the brethren in pen-portraiture, that he was a martyr to his love for his family. This is a rare fault, *if not a virtue*.

"BOSTON, May 26, 1852.

"MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—The longer I am from home the more it rejoices my heart to hear from you. On Monday and yesterday I was much disappointed in not receiving a letter from home. I usually get it on Monday; but the desired boon came to day, and the pleasure it afforded me is utterly indescribable,—George's letter threble so, on account of the line from my daughter Mary, and a motto from her that is dearer to me than my life. The motto itself I esteem a gem of immense value. I am much obliged to you and to Mary. I wish I had gotten a line, also, from son Jody. I received a motto from him last week that did me much good.

"You will learn before you get this that our new bishops are: Levi Scott, Matthew Simpson, O. S. Baker, and E. R. Ames. A very judicious selection.

We have again harnessed the two old war-horses, Doctors Bond and Elliott, to edit our *Advocates*. A retrograde movement is not always honorable and safe; but, in the present case, I think it both. Four years ago Bond and Elliott were both turned out of office, and now both are restored. The session up to this time has been harmonious. We now begin to move on in a hurry, and look forward to adjournment.

"I have seen some very fine military companies and some brilliant military parades, with splendid brass bands,—I think the finest I ever saw. Boston is a cold place; whenever the wind comes from the east it is much more chilling than the lake winds. I have worn my cloak most of the time since I came here. Sometimes in one hour the weather will change and become so cold that I almost freeze. I look forward with great interest to the time of my return home; and though I have been well treated in Boston, yet I am getting impatient to be off.

"Quite a disaster occurred on the railroad in Michigan a few days since—two trains ran together. Twenty or thirty were killed and many wounded. This is the second accident that has happened within a short time. I expect to return by the same road.

"It is now Saturday morning, May 29th, and I close my letter, hoping not to be a week behind it getting home. I have an appointment again at Newton to morrow. I have already preached there four times; the reason is, the people have been so exceedingly solicitous, after having heard me preach once, that they gave me no peace. Their preacher has been after me from Sabbath to Sabbath.

"I wish I had my children here, till I could take them into the Missionary Museum, where they could see at once a specimen of all the gods of the heathen world. There is a collection of all the idols or objects of worship known throughout the world. Mary would see a great many 'doll babies.' Tell Mary and Jody to be good children; tell them papa prays for them every day, and they must pray for themselves. I find, in looking over my letter, that I make many mistakes, for I write in company all the time and amidst conversation. Once more I bid you farewell. May the Lord bless you my dear wife and all the children.

"Yours, affectionately, A. E. PHELPS."

CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

CONTROVERSY AT HENRY—DEBATE AT HENNEPIN— OBJECTIONS TO UNIVERSALISM.

Preliminaries of Debate at Henry—Dr. Summerbell—Elder Phelps's Scriptural Argument—Quotes Luther—Summerbell's Rejoinder—C. C. Best—Sickness of His Child—Motto—Second Proposition—Rev. Oliver Barr—Third Proposition—Rev. J. Luccock Assisted Mr. Phelps—Dr. Summerbell and Rev. M'Kinney on the Negative—Remarks on the Discussion—Sermon of Rev. L. Whitney—Debate with Mr. Whitney—Preliminary Sermons—Propositions—Arguments—Mr. Phelps's Argument Against the System.

ON June 1st he wrote: "Conference will adjourn to-day. It has been a session of good feeling. Some few things have been done that some of us could not sanction, such as striking out every thing in the Discipline against pews, but the majority of changes I heartily approve. Rock River Conference will be on the 15th day of September. Our boundaries remain unmolested."*

Mr. Phelps had the honor of introducing the resolution on the presiding eldership, which was passed by a large majority.

*To Rev. John Morey.

The debate with Elder Barr, according to agreement, began on June 22, 1852. Elder Phelps had been home from General Conference only a few days, and his hands were full of business connected with his district. The first half day was occupied in settling preliminaries. The agreement was that in case Elder Barr's vocal organs gave out he could be permitted to furnish a substitute. He now wished to substitute Rev. Dr. E. Summerbell, then president of Merom College, in Ohio. To this Mr. Phelps objected. It would be simply setting aside the terms already agreed upon. He was willing to meet even such a noted champion as Dr. Summerbell, but not in the place of Elder Barr, unless he gave out. It had been predicted at Blackberry that he would never meet Mr. Phelps in debate again if he could possibly avoid it.

The exact form of the first proposition is not found among the notes of the debate. It affirmed the doctrine of the Trinity. Elder Phelps affirmed; Elder Barr denied.

After the arrangement of the terms of the debate was made, Mr. Phelps opened on the affirmative. On the first day he made two speeches, which were answered by Elder Barr, as his notes unmistakably show. The

debate had not proceeded far when Rev. Dr. E. Summerbell, of Cincinnati, was substituted, for Mr. Barr, with Elder Phelps's consent. The discussion of this proposition occupied seven days. It was a battle of giants. Apparently, as if by special scheming, the cause of orthodoxy was to be tested in Henry, Illinois, by its greatest opponent west of the Alleghanies, at a time when a man less noted had been put forward for that purpose. The excitement was intense.

Mr. Phelps first showed, from many passages of Scripture, that the Bible teaches a plurality in the Godhead. Secondly. He proved the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thirdly. He established by the Scriptures the Divine Unity—that there is but one God. Fourthly. He proved the deity of Christ from the divine titles. He is called thê Lord; the Lord God; God; The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the Lord God of Hosts; the "I Am;" Jehovah; the Great God; the same God; the only wise God; God over all and blessed forever; Prince of Peace; the Lord of Glory; the lord of Lords and King of kings; that he was the God whom the Patriarchs and Jews worshiped; the God who gave the law to Moses amidst the deep thunders of Sinai; the

God to whose worship the temple was erected and wherein sacrifices were offered. Fifthly. He showed that Jesus Christ possessed all the perfection of the divine nature, such as absolute eternity, immutability, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience. Sixthly. The works of Christ prove his divinity. (1.) Creation and preservation. (2.) His miracles. (3.) He gives the Holy Ghost. (4.) He forgives sin. (5.) Will destroy this mundane system. (6.) Will raise the dead. (7.) He is to judge the living and the dead. (8.) He distributes the rewards of eternity. (9.) He was worshiped on earth and in heaven. He most clearly established the deity of the Holy Ghost. His citations of Scripture on all these topics were very numerous and pointed.

His opponent labored earnestly to show a contradiction to the right reason in the affirmed threefold nature of God. He declared that he was a boy in debate compared with his opponent, but that he relied on the justness of his cause. He attacked the doctrine of the Trinity with vigor. He said we can not cut God up and label the parts. He declared that Noah Webster was a Trinitarian; that Luther was one; that this doctrine was established by force of law. He said that he was willing to stay here

a year longer and debate this question with any man.

Just before the discussion began, Mr. Phelps was summoned from the pulpit at Prairie Center, in Lasalle County, to the bedside of little Emma, then supposed to be dying. During this great encounter he was constantly anxious about his family. Besides, he was now pitted against the great champion, Rev. Summerbell, who came with a good reputation for scholarship and eloquence, and had the advantage of knowing many of his opponent's strong positions in advance.

One morning on going into the pulpit Mr. Phelps found in his Bible a beautiful motto, "May angels weave for thee a wreath of immortality," evidently placed there by a faithful friend of the Church and the cause he represented.

Mr. Summerbell was bold in debate. He was a rapid speaker and a good manager, and never did man put forth greater effort to defeat an opponent in debate than did he. He was evidently well matched for once.

Dr. Summerbell denied the authenticity of 1 John v, 7: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

He affirmed that Martin Luther had thrown it out of his translation. Having said this he shook his German Bible at his opponent, and dared him to find it. At the request of Elder Phelps, Rev. C. C. Best walked forward and read both the passage alluded to and Luther's comment interlined. This was a very serious blunder on the part of Mr. Summerbell, and by no special pleading could he remove the impression either that he was ignorant of what Luther had said, or had misrepresented him. This impression worked serious damage to the cause he represented.

The second proposition, "Do the Scriptures of divine truth teach the doctrine of the proper and personal divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ?" was debated by Rev. A. E. Phelps and Rev. Oliver Barr. One day was occupied in the discussion of this question. Mr. Barr was a genial and pleasant gentleman, but he was "no match" for Elder Phelps. This day's debate gave Mr. Summerbell one day for rest and preparation for the discussion of the next proposition; namely, "Do the Scriptures of divine truth teach the doctrine of a vicarious atonement made by the death and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ?"

Mr. Phelps affirmed, and was assisted by

Rev. John Luccock, who had rode all night in order to reach the place of debate in time. He had been notified by mail by Elder Phelps, but the letter had miscarried. Dr. N. Summerbell denied, and was assisted by Rev. M'Kinney. Dr. Luccock was then in his prime; he is now an old man, resting by the river. Mr. M'Kinney was the equal of Dr. Summerbell, in some respects his superior.* This double debate opened on the first day of July. It lasted† one day. Rev. Oliver Barr died years ago. By special request Rev. J. W. Agard participated in the funeral services.

Rev. Dr. Summerbell has been in the East for many years, where he has built up a great reputation as the defender of the "New-light" doctrines.‡ Mr. Phelps met him when in his prime of popularity in the West, and drove him from the field so effectually that his doctrines and followers have dwindled away. He met him without preliminary preparation for discussion with so able an exponent of Unitarianism. It is said that Mr. Summerbell spoke highly of Mr. Phelps's ability and candor, after the latter had gone to his reward. This was

* Rev. H. Ritchie's letter to author. † Ibid.

‡ Rev. G. W. Coleman, of Congregational Church, Sheffield, Ill., to the author.

well, for many who heard the debate thought some of Dr. Summerbell's responses to Mr. Phelps's arguments and occasional sallies of wit exceedingly coarse and in bad taste. Some allowance must be made for Church prejudices, and the friends of orthodoxy can afford to be generous, for all must admit that Dr. Summerbell was sorely pressed.

It is due to the author to say that he made an effort to receive a statement of this great controversy from Dr. Summerbell himself. The letter was returned unopened. Application was made also to a distinguished divine of that faith, a gentleman of culture and scholarship, and he declined to make any communication on the subject.* There are many living witnesses to the main statements as above noted.

Frequently Mr. Phelps drove home after the close of the day's discussion. On one or two instances Seymour Stover took Mr. Phelps's place during his absence. On one occasion, after his return, his first speech was sublime and overwhelming.† A captain of one of the packets was present, and became much interested. He said he had never heard Mr.

* Elder Coville, of Buda, Ill. He referred to Dr. Summerbell as the best authority.

† F. Smith's letter to the author.

Phelps's equal on the "stump," at the bar, or in the pulpit. C. C. Best said he had never heard his superior in the East in any Church.

The friends of orthodox Christianity presented Mr. Phelps with a paper, largely signed, assuring him of their gratitude for his able defense of the truth, and congratulating him on his gentlemanly deportment under severe provocation to a different course. Thus he had not only powerfully vindicated the Church of Christ from the assaults of the champions of Arianism, but he had carried the hearts of the people with him. His opponents could but respect him.

During Mr. Phelps's stay at Hennepin, some months previously, he preached a powerful sermon from Matthew xvi, 26. Rev. L. Whitney, then pastor of the Universalist Church, heard the discourse. He had constantly harassed the revival meeting at the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, of course, eagerly replied soon after, to Mr. Phelps's discourse. The reply was published in some of the secular papers and the *New Covenant*, published at Chicago. These few quotations from Mr. Whitney's sermon in reply will indicate to the reader how the issue was forced upon the Methodist Episcopal Church and Mr. Phelps.

not exposed to evil or suffering in the future world, as this system maintains.

Third Objection: It contradicts the Bible in asserting that men are punished in this life in full for all their sins. Job xxi, 7, 8, 9, 13: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses *are* safe from fear, neither *is* the rod of God upon them. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave." Jer. xii, 1: "Righteous *art* thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of *thy* judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *Wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously?" Ecc. ix, 2: "All things come alike to all: *there is* one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good, and to the clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not; as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; and he that sweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath." Ps. lxxvii, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12: "For I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For *there are* no bands in their death; but their strength *is* firm. They *are* not in trouble as other men; neither are

they plagued like *other* men. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. Behold these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches." 1 Tim. iv, 2: "Speaking in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron." Eph. iv, 19: "Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." 2 Thes. ii, 11, 12: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Heb. x, 36: "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Prov. v, 11: "And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed."

Fourth Objection: Universalism teaches the materiality and mortality of the soul. This doctrine is expressly vindicated by Walter Balfour in his inquiry. (See Rice, page 113.) Most of the advocates of the system assert the doctrine of the final holiness of all mankind, mainly upon the resurrection argument; if this is to fit men for heaven, then both soul and body must be the subjects of this resur-

rection, and therefore both alike mortal and material.

The following Scriptures—Matt. xxii, 32 : “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” Matthew, xvii, 3 : “And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.” Luke xxiii, 43 : “And Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Acts vii, 59 : “And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Phil. i, 21 : “For to me to live *is* Christ, but to die *is* gain;” 23 : “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better;” 24 : “Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you.” 2 Cor. v, 8, 9 : “We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.” Luke xvi, 22, 23 : “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried : and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his

bosom." Rev. vii, 14: "And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Fifth Objection: This doctrine makes God the author of all sin in the world. (See Ballou on "Atonement," pages 31, 32, 34, 36, 37; "Pro and Con of Universalism," page 255; Ballou on "Atonement," page 41.) "The devil that tempted our mother Eve was her carnal mind that God gave her." (Ballou on "Atonement," page 48.) "Christ tempted by his own lusts." (Page 49.) "Man a mere passive machine." (Page 64.) The Scriptures teach that man was made upright and in the image of God. Gen. i. 27: "So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Eph. iv, 24: "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Gen. i, 31: "And God saw every thing that he had made: and behold *it was* very good." Eccl. vii, 29: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."

Sixth Objection: It denies the doctrine of a vicarious atonement. (Ballou on "Atone-

ment," pages 122, 123, 177.) Isa. liii, 6, 10, 12; "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put *him* to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

1 Peter ii, 24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." 1

Peter i, 18, 19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as silver and gold*," . . . "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Ezk. xviii, 20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be

upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Lev. xxii, 9: "They shall, therefore, keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die therefore if they profane it." Lam. v, 7: "Our fathers have sinned *and are* not; and we have borne their iniquities." Hence it is said, 1 Peter ii, 24: "Who his own self bare our sins." Isa. liii, 11: "For he shall bear their iniquities." 12: "And he bare the sin of many." Heb. ix, 28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." 1 Cor. xv, 3: "For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." Rom. iv, 25: "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." 1 Peter iii, 18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit." Rom. v, 6: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Eph. i, 7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Col. i, 14: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins." 1 Tim. ii, 6: "Who

gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

Seventh Objection: Universalism denies the doctrine of justification by faith or the pardon of sin. (Power and Doolittle, page 114; Rice, page 175.)

Eighth Objection: While the Gospel brings comfort to the penitent and obedient, Universalism comforts the sinner in his sins. Isa. lxi, 1, 2, 3: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Isa. lv, 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Matt.

v, 3, 8: "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed *are* the pure in heart for they shall see God."

Ninth Objection: The Scriptures and reason teach that some men will suffer in a future state, and suffer eternally. Now are the offers of salvation. 2 Cor. vi, 2: "Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation." Some die impenitent. John iii, 36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Mark xvi, 16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark iii, 29: "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." Luke xii, 4: "And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do." Heb. ix, 27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Rev. xx, 11-15: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books

were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. xxi, 7, 8: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." James ii, 13: "For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." Heb. x, 26, 27, 28, 29: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses's

law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?" Prov. xxix, 1: "He that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Matt. xxvi, 24: "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but wo unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." Acts i, 25: "That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." John v, 28, 29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Luke xiv, 14: "And thou shalt be blessed: for they can not recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Acts xxiv, 15: "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow,

that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Daniel xii, 2 : "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Jude 7 : "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

Tenth Objection : Universalism makes God cruel, unjust, and false : cruel and unjust, because it represents God as punishing men for doing what he compelled them to do ; false, because he forbids sin in his Word, and yet compels men to commit it. Ballou on "Atonement," p. 64 ; "Pro and Con," 290, 283-4, 9.

The following Scriptures he quotes to show : 1. The conditional character of the divine promises ; 2. That God pardons sins ; 3. The character of the resurrection.

GOD'S PROMISES CONDITIONAL.

Genesis xv, 13-16 : "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them ; and they shall afflict them

four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." Exodus xii, 24, 25: "And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service." Numbers xiv, 28, 35: "Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: . . . I the Lord have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die." Hebrews 3, 19: "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."

GOD'S PLEASURE.

Isaiah xlvî, 10: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

Psalm v, 4: "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee." Hebrews x, 38: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

PARDON OF SIN.

"Luke xxiv, 46, 47: "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Matthew xxvi, 28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Luke i, 77: "To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of sins." Acts ii, 38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts x, 43: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Romans iii, 25: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness

for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

REMISSION OF SINS IMPLIES A RELEASE FROM DE-SERVED PUNISHMENT.

Matthew vi, 12: "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Luke xi, 4: "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." Ephesians iv, 32: "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Colossians iii, 13: "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

RESURRECTION—THOSE WORTHY TO OBTAIN THAT WORLD.

Luke xxi, 36: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."
2 Thessalonians i, 5: "Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer."

CHAPTER TWELFTH.

SUBJECTS AND MODE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Definition of the Church of Christ—The Old Covenant—Justification always by Faith—Unity of the Church—Children Members of the Jewish Church—Scriptural Proofs—The Mode of Baptism—*Βάπτω*—Classical Definition—The Translations—Baptizo—Translations—The Fathers—The Prepositions—Scriptural Argument—Mr. Wolf—Syrian Christians—John's Baptism—Christ's Baptism—Sprinkling represents Sanctification.

THIS chapter comprises simply the notes used by Mr. Phelps in debate on this subject, stated concisely and only for his own use. The argument couched in these notes is massive, and will be read with profit by all. Occasionally the reader will need to supply the portion of the sentence implied.

INFANT BAPTISM.

Matt. xxviii, 19, 20: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world. Amen." Not a commission to organize a new Church, but to extend the bounds of the old one. All who are entitled to membership should be baptized. To settle this we turn to the original law of membership.

A definition of the Church of Christ. “The Church is a body of people separated from the world for the service of God, with ordinances of divine appointment, and a door of entrance, as a rite by which membership shall be recognized.” Such a Church was organized in the family of Abraham. Gen., chapters xii, xv, and xvii. In the two former, the covenant is named; in the latter, it is ratified by circumcision, and a Church organization consummated. Gen. xvii, 7: “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee.” Verse 10: “This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man child among you shall be circumcised.” Verse 14: “And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.”

Abraham and his posterity were from this time called God's people. God said to Pharaoh, “Let my people go, that they may serve me.” Ex. viii, 1. Again, Isa. lii, 4: “My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there.” Acts vii, 38: “This is he, that was in the Church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us.”

That this covenant embraced spiritual blessings is evident, first, from the language, “I will be a God unto thee,” etc. Refer to Jer. xxxi, 33; Heb. viii, 10; Rev. xxi, 3. All the spiritual blessings the Christian enjoys under the present dispensation, they

enjoyed under the covenant made with Abraham. Gal. iii, 9: "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Gal. iii, 14, 29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." One covenant with Abraham: 1 Chron. xvi, 15, 16, 17; Ex. ii, 24; Psalm cv, 8, 9, 10, 11; Acts iii, 25.

Children then were put in the Church by positive law: they must be put out by positive law, if at all.

1. On Church identity. Under both dispensations the same God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is acknowledged, worshiped, and obeyed.

2. The same moral law is obligatory.

3. Under both dispensations we have the same Redeemer.

4. The same Gospel. Gal. iii, 8: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Heb. iv, 2: "For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well unto them," etc.

5. The doctrine of justification by faith was taught under both dispensations. Rom. iv. 3: "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Isa. xxviii, 16: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

6. The doctrine of sanctification by the Holy Spirit is taught in this text; Ezek. xxxvi, 25, 26: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye

shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Psalm li, 10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

7. The resurrection of the dead taught in the Old Testament. Job xix, 25, 26: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." 1 Cor. xv, 3, 4: "For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

8. Repentance taught also in Psalm li, 17: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Isa. lv, 6, 7: "Seek ye Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

That the same covenant made with Abraham, and that constituted the children of believers members of the Church, still exists under the Gospel dispensation is evident—

1. From the fact that it was "confirmed in Christ." Gal. iii, 17: "And this I say, That the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ,

the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of no effect."

2. It engaged to bless all nations. Gal. iii, 8: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."

3. Christians are Abraham's seed. Gal. iii, 7. 29; "Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Rom. iv, 11, 12, 16: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed: not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."

4. Both Paul and Peter assert its existence under the present dispensation. Gal. iii, 15, 16, 17: "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of

one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, That the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." Acts iii, 25: "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."

That the Church is essentially the same both under the Jewish and Christian dispensations, while the exterior dress and ordinances have been changed, is evident from the following Scriptures:

Isa. liv, 1, 2, 3: "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited."

Isa. lx, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons

shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee."

Matt. xxi, 43: "Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

Matt. viii, 11, 12: "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Rom. xi, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24: "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches; but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, the branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-

tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree?"

Eph. ii, 11-22: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances: for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God, in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Acts xv, 16, 17: "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof,

and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

We have now proved the perpetuity of the covenant made with Abraham. First. That covenant secured Church membership to infants as fully as to believing adults. Secondly, the Church set up in the family of Abraham is the same in which Christians under the Gospel dispensation enjoy membership. And, thirdly, into this Church infants were placed by positive law.

Where is the law of repulsion or rejection? The apostles were Jews, and therefore would not have expelled children without a command, eight years before they would preach to a Gentile. Matt. xxviii, 19, 20: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Children belong to Christ by purchase, by redemption. Rom. v, 18: "Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

Penitent believing adults are baptized because their repentance and faith have brought them into connection with Christ. Infants sustain the same relation. Repentance and faith with them are unnecessary. Repentance supposes guilt; faith secures an interest in Christ. Infants have no need of either.

They have this interest by virtue of the atonement. Matt. xix, 14: "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." In Mark x, 13, 14, they are called young children. Verse 16: "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." In Luke xviii, 15, they are called "infants."

Acts xvi, 14, 15: "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come unto my house, and abide there. And she constrained us."

Acts ii, 38, 39: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Eph. vi, 1: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right."

1. These children were so young that Paul enjoins no duty but to obey their parents, and the parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

2. These children were in the Church. First. From the addresses of the letter. Second. They were said to be in the Lord—this implies Church

membership. Philemon 16: "Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord." Romans xvi, 7-11.

3. They are commanded to honor their father and mother, which was the first commandment with promise. This promise was first made to children in the covenant with God. Exodus xx, 12: "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Deuteronomy v, 16: "Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Genesis xvii, 8: "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." 1 Corinthians x, 1, 2: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." 1 Corinthians vii, 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

Lastly, the historic evidences. Children can be taken into covenant with God. Deuteronomy xxix, 10, 11, 12: "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is

in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day."

Objection: Both men and women were baptized, but no children. Joshua viii, 25, 26: "And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai. For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai." Judges ix, 49, 50, 51: "And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the men of the towers of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women. Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it. But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut it to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower."

The subject of the mode of Christian baptism has provoked discussion among sister Churches throught Christendom. The earnest advocates of exclusive immersion, in the belief that they alone hold the truth on this subject, have compelled investigation. The brief outline of the argument in favor of baptism by sprinkling or pouring is concise, comprehensive, and apparently unanswerable.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

BAPTO (*Βαπτο*).

The lexicons render this word to wash, as well as to immerse, etc.

Hedericus renders the word, "To immerse, to plunge, to dye, to wash," etc.

Scapula: "To immerse, to plunge; also, to stain, dye, color; also, to wash."

Coulon: "To immerse, to dye, to cleanse."

Ursinus: "To dip, to dye, to wash, to sprinkle."

Schrevelius: "To dip, to dye, to wash, to draw water."

Groves: "To dip, plunge, immerse, to wash, to wet, to moisten, sprinkle, to steep, imbue, to dye."

Donnegan: "To dip, to plunge into water, to submerge, to wash, to dye, to color," etc.

Dr. Carson, a Baptist critic of great distinction, says: "Bapto signifies to dye by sprinkling, as properly as by dipping; though originally it was confined to the latter." Again: "Nor are such applications of the word to be accounted for by metaphor, as Dr. Gale asserts; they are as literal as the primary meaning."

BAPTIZO (*Βαπτίζω*).

Scapula, one of the old lexicographers: "To dip, or immerse, also to dye—as we immerse things for the purpose of coloring or washing them; also to plunge, submerge, to cover with water, also to cleanse, to wash." Baptismos he thus defines: "Immersion, washing, cleansing, the act itself of immersing, also washing or cleansing."

Hedericus: "1. To dip, immerse, to cover with water; 2. To cleanse, to wash; 4. To baptize in a sacred sense."

Stephanus: "To dip, immerse, as we immerse things for the purpose of coloring or washing; to merge, submerge, to cover with water, to cleanse, to wash."

Schleusner: "Not only to plunge, immerse, but to cleanse—as to purify with water."

Parkhurst: "To immerse in, or wash with, water in token of purification."

Robinson: "To immerse, to sink, for example, spoken of ships, galleys," etc. In the New Testament, "to wash, to cleanse by washing, to wash one's self, to bathe, perform ablution," etc.

Schrevelius: "To baptize, to immerse, to cleanse, to wash."

Groves: "To dip, immerse, immerge, plunge; to wash, cleanse, purify, to wash one's self, bathe."

Bretschneider: "Often to dip, often to wash; then, Old Testament, simply to wash, to cleanse."

Suidas: "Not only to sink, plunge, immerse, but to wet, wash, cleanse, purify," etc."

Wall: "First, wash, perform ablution, cleanse; secondly, to immerse," etc.

Greenfield: "To immerse, immerge, submerge, sink;" and in the New Testament, "To wash, perform ablution, cleanse, to immerse."

Thus Robinson, one of the first lexicographers, first gives the definition to immerse, to sink; but in the New Testament the first meaning he finds is to wash, to cleanse by washing, to perform ablution.

Bretschneider gives, as the general meaning of the

word baptizo, "Often to dip, often to wash." But in the New Testament the first meaning he gives is simply, to wash, to cleanse.

Greenfield, in the New Testament: "To wash, perform ablution, cleanse, to immerse."

CLASSICS. *Bapto.*

Hippocrates says of a certain coloring fluid: "When it drops on the garments they are baptized."

Carson, the Baptist critic, says that Nearchus relates that the Indians baptized their beards, and he (Carson) remarks, "It will not be contended that it was done by immersion."

Elian says of an old coxcomb, who endeavored to conceal his age, that he "baptized his hair."

Aristotle speaks of a substance which, "being pressed, staineth [*βαπτει*] the hand."

Plutarch says of a Roman general, who died on the field of his wounds, that, having set up a trophy, he baptized his hand in blood and wrote an inscription.

Hippocrates said, "If the blister be painful, baptize it with a little breast-milk."

THE TRANSLATIONS.

The Peshito-Syriac, Ethiopic, and the Vulgate have all rendered the word bapto, sprinkled, in Revelation xix, 13.

Jerome, the author of the Vulgate, was himself a true immersionist, and yet, despite his prejudices, he translated bapto by the word sprinkle.

Origen, the most learned of the Greek Fathers,

has translated this passage the same way; he has substituted *rhantizo* for *bapto*.

BAPTIZO.

The old Peshito-Syriac version does not translate the word *baptizo* by any word implying immersion, but by the word "*Amad*."

Schaaf, in his Syriac lexicon, defines *amad* thus: "He washed himself, was washed, stained, immersed in water, was baptized." He has examined every place in the New Testament where that word occurs, and finds not one place where it implies immersion.

The Vulgate, and the old Italic version from which it was rendered: Neither of them translates the word *immerse*, but in both it is transferred, as in our version.

The Vulgate, too, it should be remembered, was translated in the fourth century, when the practice of immersion was very general, yet instead of translating the word *baptizo* by *mergo* or *immerge*, merely transfers it.

Tyndale, in his translation, also transfers the word wherever it refers to the ordinance; where it is not so used he translates it by the word *wash*, as in Mark vii, 4: "And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables." Luke xi, 38: "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that he had not first washed before dinner."

The Arabic version, which is of the greatest authority, translates *baptizo* by a word of the same

import as the Syriac word "Amad," implying to wash.

The Persic version also translates baptizo by a word signifying to wash.

The Ethiopic translates it by a word implying ablution as well as immersion.

The Sahiolic and Basmusic versions transfer the word.

The Armenian uses a word which in one instance signifies to dip; in all others implies to bathe, or perform ablution.

The Anglo Saxon translation uses a word which means to cleanse.

The Geneva Bible, Italic, Arias Montanus, and Tyndale's all, either transfer the word baptizo, or translate it by a word that signifies to wash or cleanse.

Mr. Rice gives nineteen versions, in not one of which is baptizo translated by a word that definitely signifies to immerse.

THE FATHERS.

Cyprian and his council of bishops, sixty-six in number, in the year 250 decided on the validity of sprinkling or pouring in baptism in case of sickness, and quoted Ezek. xxxvi, 25, in proof of sprinkling: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."

Arclius Prudentius, who wrote in the year 390, speaking of John's baptism, says, "He poured water on them in the river."

Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, a few years later, says:

"He [John] washed away the sins of unbelievers by the pouring of water."

Bernard, speaking of the baptism of our Lord by John, says: "The creature poured water on the head of the Creator."

Origen says that Elisha baptized the altar. 1 Kings xviii, 33: "And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood."

Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of a certain backslider who was reclaimed by the Apostle John, and says: "He was baptized a second time with tears."

Athanasius mentions eight baptisms, one of which was by tears.

Gregory Nazianzen says: "I know of a fourth baptism, that of martyrdom and blood, and I know of a fifth, that of tears."

Basil tells us of a martyr that was baptized into Christ with his own blood. When immersion became the general practice of the Church in the third and fourth centuries, the Greeks, when they wished to express immersion definitely, used the word *kata-deno*, but still retained the word *baptizo* to denote the ordinance. The Latins likewise used different words to denote immersion, such as *mergo*, *mergito*, *immergo*; but when they spoke of baptism in their own language, they rendered it *lavo*.

GREEK PREPOSITIONS—*εἰς* AND *ἐκ*.

2 Kings vi, 4: "So he went with them. And when they came to (*εἰς*) Jordan, they cut down wood." John viii, 23: "And he said unto them, Ye

are from (ἐξ) beneath; I am from (ἐξ) above: ye are of (ἐξ) this world; I am not of (ἐξ) this world." John ix, 1: "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from (ἐξ) his birth." John xi, 31-38: "The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto (εἰς) the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at (εἰς) his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him. And some of them said, Could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to (εἰς) the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it."

Acts xxvi, 14: "And when we were all fallen to (εἰς) the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." John xx, 3, 4, 5: "Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to (εἰς) the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to (εἰς) the sepulchre. And he stooping, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in." Matt. xvii, 24: "And when they were come to

(εἰς) Capernaum, they that received tribute-money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?" Matt. v, 1: "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into (εἰς) a mountain, and when he was set, his disciples came unto him."

ANASTAS. PAUL'S BAPTISM.

He arose and was baptized. Matt. xxvi, 62: "And the high-priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee?" Mark xiv, 57: "And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying," etc. Acts i, 15: "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said (the number of the names together were about an hundred and twenty)." Acts xiii, 16: "Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand, said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience." Acts xv, 7: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago, God made choice among us, that the Gentiles, by my mouth, should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe." Acts xi, 28: "And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit, that there should be great dearth throughout all the world; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.

BAPTIZO AND BAPTO AS USED IN THE SCRIPTURE.

Mark vii, 4: "And when they come from the market, except they wash they eat, not. And many other things there be, which they have received to

hold, as the setting of cups and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables."

Lev. xl. 38. "And when the Priests saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner." Here Mr. Campbell himself mistakes his passage well. The High Priest was to wash both of the above by the vessel called. (Hibon, page 14.)

11th. Ex. 11. "Which were only in rooms and dens, and down wallings, and upon columns, supported all times until the time of destruction."

Some of these seven buildings are mentioned in the 14th, 15th, and 16th verses. "For of the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the tabernacle, according to the precept of the Lord. . . . And when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and sweet wine, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people. . . . Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry."

Lev. xiv. 6, 7. "And for the leprosy bird, he shall take it, and the cedarwood, and the hyssop, and the living bird, to the blood of the bird that was killed, and the running water. And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let him living into the open field." Verse 16. "And the priest shall lay his right finger to his ear, and to his eye, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord."

Num. xix. 27-29. "And for an unclean person

they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave. And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even. But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the Lord: the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him: he is unclean."

1 Cor. x, 1, 2: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea."

Matt. iii, 11: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

Acts ii, 1, 2, 3, 4, 17, 18, 33: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues

like as of fire, and sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Verse 17: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants, and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." Verse 33: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Acts x, 44: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word." Acts xi, 15: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." Peter says the Holy Ghost "fell" on them.

ARGUMENTS FOR SPRINKLING OR POURING.

First Argument: All the washings of the Old Testament where the mode is prescribed are required to be performed by sprinkling. Lev. xiv; Num. xix, 17, 20. These were emblematic of spiritual cleaning or sanctification.

Ps. v, 1-7: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Isa. i, 16: "Wash ye, make you clean: put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil."

Second Argument: The inspired writers never represent sanctification by dipping a person in water.

Third Argument: The inspired writers did constantly represent sanctification by sprinkling or pouring.

Ezk. xxxvi, 25: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."

Isa. xlv, 3: "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring."

Isa. lii, 15: "So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider."

Fourth Argument: The work of the Holy Spirit, of which water baptism is an emblem, is also called baptism.

1 Cor. xii, 13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

Matt. iii, 11: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

The one we know is performed by pouring, so must be the other.

Fifth Argument: From the time Christian baptism was instituted there is not an instance on record where any apostle or minister went one step out of his way in search of water for the purpose of baptizing.

Sixth Argument: The circumstances under which baptism was frequently administered were unfavorable to immersion. On the day of Pentecost three thousand were baptized in six hours in Jerusalem. Acts ii, 41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

The Jailer Baptized in Prison. Acts xvi, 33: "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."

Paul's Baptism. Acts xxii, 16: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Seventh Argument: John says, "I indeed baptize you with water. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

Eighth Argument: Immersion is, under many circumstances, to say the least of it, a burdensome rite: in sickness often dangerous, in many countries impracticable.

Ninth Argument: Pure water should be required for purposes of baptism. Heb. x, 22: "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." This can not always be done in immersion.

Tenth Argument: 1 John v, 7, 8: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water and the blood: and these three agree in one."

The blood we know is sprinkled. Heb. xii, 24: "And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." I Peter i, 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace be multiplied."

The Spirit is poured out.

Tertullian of the third century is the first writer of credit that speaks of immersion.

Cyprian and his council of bishops, sixty-six in number, decided on the validity of baptism by sprinkling in the year 254, and quote in proof Ezk. xxxvi, 25: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you."

Mr. Walker, an English writer, who studied this subject with great care, in his book on baptism mentions the case of a man, some sixty or seventy years after the apostles, who, whilst on a journey, was taken dangerously ill, professed Christianity, and desired baptism. As water could not be obtained, the place being a desert, he was sprinkled with sand; he recovered, and the case being reported to the bishop, he decided that he was baptized, "if only water was poured on him." (Page 178.)

Mr. Wolf, the missionary in Mesopotamia, mentions in his journal a sect of Christians he found there that called themselves "the followers of John the Baptist, who was a follower of Christ." Among other questions, Mr. Wolf inquired of them their mode of baptism, and was answered, "The priests or bishops baptize children thirty days old. They

take the child to the banks of the river; a relative or friend of the child holds it near the surface of the water while the priest sprinkles the element upon the child, and with prayer they name the child." (Journal, Vol. II, p. 311.) Mr. Wolf asks, "Why do you baptize in rivers?" Answer, "Because John the Baptist baptized in the River Jordan." The same account was afterward given by one of their bishops or high-priests.

THE SYRIAN CHRISTIANS.

Among the Syrian Christians, though immersion is used, it does not take place till after the true baptismal rite, pouring water upon the child, has been performed. (Watson's Institutes, Vol. II, p. 654.)

JOHN'S BAPTISM.

1. The population of Palestine at the time of John's ministry was six millions.

2. It is said: "There went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan." Matt. iii, 5, 6: "And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." St. Mark i, 5: "And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Luke iii, 21: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened." To say the least three millions must have been baptized by him.

3. His ministry was not more than nine months. Reference to Luke.

John was six months older than Christ. Luke i, 36.

Christ was baptized when he was thirty years of age. Luke iii, 21, 22, 23: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art my beloved son; in thee am I well pleased. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli."

John was imprisoned about three months after Christ's baptism. (See Hibbard on the "Mode," page 21.)

This included one Winter season, hence much loss of time by inclement weather. Deduct the Sabbaths included, and we have two hundred and twenty-nine days; allowing six hours a day for baptizing, he must have baptized about two thousand two hundred every hour and thirty-six every minute.

CHRIST'S BAPTISM.

Matt. iii, 13, 14, 15: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him."

Righteousness is conformity to law. This, then, supposes this existence of some law requiring his baptism. This is found in Ex. xxix, 4: "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt

wash them with water." The same in Lev. viii, 6, 30: "And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him."

Christ's baptism was a priestly consecration.

1. He was thirty years of age. Luke iii, 33. Compare with Num. iv, 3: "From thirty years old and upward, even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation."

2. Christ was a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, otherwise he could not have offered a sacrifice for us. Heb. ix, 14; xxvi, 28.

3. As soon as he was baptized he entered upon his public ministry.

4. He took possession of the temple and purified it. Matt. xxi, 12: "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves." When the chief-priests and elders demanded the authority for so doing, he asked them the question, "The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or of men?" As they could not answer him he added, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."

God represents sanctification by sprinkling. Ezekiel xxxvi, 25: "Then will I sprinkle clean water

upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Heb. x, 22: "Having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." Heb. ix, 13: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh." 1 Peter, i, 2: "Unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." "So shall he sprinkle many nations." (Isa. lii, 15.)

The summing up of the foregoing argument would present an array of facts not easily explained away. Persons in doubt on this subject can obtain light in this chapter on baptism. It is the mere skeleton of Elder Phelps's addresses on this subject. Although he was such an able defender of baptism by effusion, he entertained great respect for the Baptist Church, as one of the branches of Christ's militant body.

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

THE MAN AND HIS METHODS.

Personal appearance—Activity—Knowledge—Memory—Adaptation—As a Singer—As a Speaker—An Incident—Rev. C. W. Batchelor—Pastoral Visiting—The Preacher and the “Johnny - cake”—His Oratory—Sketches of Sermons—Fragments from his Scrap-book—Old Friendships—His Politics—Impressive Manner—A Reminiscence.

ASAHEL E. PHELPS was about five feet and nine inches in height, of nervous-bilious temperament, with enough sanguine to make him hopeful in the midst of trials. His hair was dark, his forehead was lofty, his lips thin, his face smoothly shaven, and his countenance expressive. He moved quickly, spoke rapidly and with ease, and was seldom entirely still unless asleep. He was one of the greatest workers the West has produced. He was never idle. His knowledge was all of a useful character. His memory was wonderful. At times it seemed as if he could repeat the whole Bible from memory. He was genial. He had the faculty of adapting himself to

every class of people. He seemed at home anywhere. His voice was clear; his tones were rich and pure. He was a very sweet singer. In the family circle he often sang the songs of Zion, to the delight of the hundreds of families whose homes were "home" to him in "journeyings oft." He was a pleasant speaker. At times he was glowingly eloquent. He was a laborious student, and was remarkably accurate in all of his statements. In the family circle he was easy and companionable. At the house of a stranger, in the act of helping himself to butter, his knife went into the center of the rich yellow ball, when, with perfect composure, he said, "That knife runs to land too much;" and thus diverted attention from his embarrassment by creating a roar of laughter.

He enjoyed an innocent joke most heartily, and had a keen sense of the ridiculous. Once on his way to Conference, in company with Rev. C. W. Batchelor, there came up a heavy rain shower. The latter put down his umbrella, and urged his horse into a gallop. Mr. Phelps was so amused that he could scarcely sit on his horse. He laughed at the effort of his brother minister to outride the rain, until the shower was over.

He was a trim, neat, fine-appearing man. He was often mistaken by strangers for a lawyer. He was a rapid walker, and would frequently call at all the Methodist houses in a town in a few minutes. Some one who had never seen Elder Phelps inquired of Rev. C. W. Batchelor as to his personal appearance, who responded, "When you see a man walk so rapidly that his coat-tail will stick out straight behind him, you will see A. E. Phelps."

He once had under his charge a preacher who was very careful about his diet, so *very* particular that the people found fault with him, and the matter came to the ears of his presiding elder, who, in the presence of several preachers, remarked that this brother was a great lover of "Johnny-cake." Of course he quickly denied it. Mr. Phelps proposed that his satchel be searched. The preacher agreed to this with hearty good will. The search was made, and the "Johnny-cake" was handed out, to the great amusement of the brethren present. The minister upon whom the joke was played positively despised bread made from Indian corn. This is now a luxury; then it was a necessity, and was much disliked by some. Thus the good man was taught the lesson to "eat what is set before

him, asking no questions" on account of his peculiar tastes.

He was a man of one work. He gave his whole life to the work of the ministry. He prepared his sermons with much care, and delivered them without manuscript or notes. He did not commit his sermons to memory, but made himself thoroughly master of his subject, and in the presentation of it his thoughts and words flowed as from a deep and pure fountain. He was a logician and an orator. He could lecture, preach, debate, exhort, or conduct a revival meeting with equal success. In debate he rarely met his equal, and never his superior. He held numerous discussions, some of which have not even been named, and in every case the Church was honored by his able defense of her doctrines. His best sermons, probably, were destroyed by an accident that so disfigured many of them that he committed them to the flames. Neither manuscript nor notes of his most powerful sermons are extant. It was no uncommon thing for an audience to become bewildered with excitement under his preaching and exhortations. Sometimes they would rise up and crowd close to the pulpit. He preached a sermon in Wyoming, on the destruction of the world by fire,

that was positively startling.* At Kickapoo, Ill., on the Judgment, he brought a lady to her feet several times.†

The reader will be glad to look at a few "outlines" of plain sermons, prepared near the conclusion of his ministry. These brief sketches, taken from a small "scrap-book" exactly in the order in which they are found, are models of simplicity and compactness:

"What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?"—ISAIAH V, 4:

The vine grew in luxuriance in Palestine. Numbers xiii, 23; Genesis xlix, 11, 12. Climate and soil congenial to its growth. Vineyards abounded in the land. Hence the frequent use of this figure.

First, it is in the text applied to the Jewish nation: planted in a goodly land, they shared the blessings of Providence and special protection of Heaven. He gave them laws, priests, and prophets to instruct them.

Second. Applicable to our nation. We are blessed with great natural advantages—productive soil, commercial facilities, and mineral resources. A land of plenty and luxury; civil and religious liberty; peace and quietness. Famine prevails in other countries; luxuries abound here.

We are blessed with all the means of grace. It is a land of Bibles; blessed with an efficient ministry,

* General Thomas to the author.

† Mr. Thomas Beall to the author.

and with the sacraments and ordinances in their purity. The means provided for our salvation are ample, and men are left without excuse.

PSALM CXXXIX, 1-4.

This text presents to our consideration the omniscience of God, sustained by the following: Job xxviii, 10, 24; Acts xv, 18; Hebrews iv, 13; 1 John iii, 20; Job xxxvii, 16; Psalm cxlvii, 5; Proverbs xv, 3. Thus we have learned that every thing in the vast universe of being—from the smallest animalcule that floats on the bosom of the breeze, unperceived by the ken of mortals, up to the tallest seraph that bows before the divine throne, is at once under the all-penetrating eye of Jehovah. His knowledge extends not merely to the past and present, but throughout all future duration.

ACTS XV, 18; ISAIAH XLVI, 9, 10.

All prophecy proves the perfect prescience of God.

But God's prescience does not interfere in the least with the liberty of human actions. Knowledge, simply considered, possesses no creative, effective, or productive power, no constraining influence. It may direct an action to an end, but can not produce an action, or destroy the moral liberty of one.

That God's prescience does not affect the freedom of the human will, or abridge man's moral liberty, is evident from the following considerations:

1. All men are conscious of moral liberty.
2. If man is not free in his volitions and actions, he is not a proper subject of moral government,—

God has mistaken man's nature in imposing upon him such a government.

3. The precepts, promises, threatenings, of the Scriptures are, therefore, a mere hoax.

4. If man moves merely as he is moved upon, God's written Word and his purposes are at war,—he forbids in his Word what he compels them to do by his decrees.

5. If man possesses no such liberty he is not accountable—neither rewardable nor punishable.

6. All human governments are based upon the assumption that men are free in their volitions and actions; otherwise they would never punish crime.

7. If man is not free God is the author of sin, the only efficient agent in the universe.

PURE RELIGION. JAMES I, 27.

Religion is twofold, experimental and practical. The one is what we experience; the other, what we practice. The former is the religion of the heart; the latter, that of the life. Experimental religion is a work of grace in the heart, renewing it, sanctifying it, bringing it into communion with God, and securing the peace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is the second branch of religion that our apostle is describing in the text; namely, practical. This he presents, both in its positive and negative aspects. The first consists in works of mercy; the second, in purity of life.

The latter is, freedom from all the sinful and vicious practices of the world. He keeps himself unspotted from the world. His intercourse with the

world neither affects his habits nor his spirit. He has no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. His light shines wherever he moves.

He abounds in works of mercy. The fatherless and widows are mentioned as two cases out of many. They stand here as representatives of all objects of distress and charity of every kind. Christianity is both active and benevolent in its spirit. Nothing selfish. "She seeks not her own;" but breathes good will to all men, and goes forth as an angel of mercy into the haunts of poverty and human wretchedness and degradation, and proffers relief.

"Whom we preach, warning every man," etc.—*COLOSSIANS I, 28.*

I. The subject of preaching.

II. The manner of preaching: warning every man, and teaching.

III. The end of preaching: "to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

I CORINTHIANS I, 23; II, 2.

I. The great burden of pulpit instruction is Christ,—Christ, in his character, perfections, and different relations to us. He is the only object of faith; his merits the only ground of our acceptance with God, our only trust for salvation. Acts iv, 12. The only foundation of our hopes. *I Corinthians iii, 11.* Christ was the great subject of prophecy in the Old Testament. His advent, sufferings, and death lighted up the prophetic fire in the bosom of holy men, and attuned the harp of the sacred psalmist to the most sublime strains that earth ever heard.

All religious truth, all saving grace, originates in him, and all of Heaven's mercy that ever reached our world since the fall of man flows through him. He should be preached in all his offices as Prophet, Priest, and King, and in all his claims upon us.

II. The manner—"warning." First. This implies danger. All have sinned and therefore all in danger, till they fly to Christ for refuge. It is the business of the ministers to make them acquainted with this danger. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death." Sin when finished bringeth forth death. The sentence already passed upon the sinner, "Condemned already." "Wrath of God abideth on him." Second. Warned against all sin. Isa. lviii, 1. Third. Sin in believers.

III. "Teaching every man." All must be instructed: First, in the doctrines of Christ. (1 Tim. iv, 16.) Secondly, in their duties. Thirdly, their privileges.

IV. Lastly, the object of preaching. To present every man perfect in Christ. Stupendous object. Men are guilty; the Gospel provides pardon. They are corrupt; it presents a "fountain for sin and uncleanness." They are polluted; it sanctifies. They are degraded and ruined by sin; it saves and elevates to heaven. The great object of the Savior's death is the moral purity of his people. (Titus ii, 14.) The same by the institution of the Gospel.

He made extensive notes on current events. The following quotations from his scrap-book, written by his own hand, may suggest to those who wonder at his great fertility, the source

of this strength. *He took especial pains to "gather up the fragments."*

WAR.

Expenses of the navy of the United States per annum, \$7,000,000—about \$20,000 per day.

British navy, \$33,000,000 per annum. French navy, above \$12,000,000. Costs of our navy are more than all the profits of our commerce it is designed to protect. (*Western Christian Advocate*, No. 35, Vol. XII.)

Appropriation to the British navy for the current year (1845) is \$33,620,200.

The war debt of European nations amounts to \$10,000,000,000, or ten billions. It would require the labor of 4,000,000 of men, at \$150 per annum, to pay the interest at six per cent, and \$10 of each individual on the globe to pay the principal.

There have been 14,000,000,000 of men slain in war on earth. (*Christian Advocate and Journal*, Vol. XX, No. 28, page 111.)

CRUSADES,

Continuing 260 years, sacrificed the lives of 2,000,000 of men, besides women and children.

WAR DEPARTMENT.

From the adoption of the Federal Constitution down to 1848 there have been paid directly from the National Treasury of the United States for the army and fortifications \$366,913,209; for the navy and its operations, \$209,994,428—total, \$576,707,637. For the militia during the same time, \$1,500,000,000.

Making a total of \$2,076,707,637. (*Western Christian Advocate*, No. 52, Vol. 16. Whole No. 818.)

ROMANISM.

The Roman Inquisition was first established in the twelfth century. Was introduced into Seville, in Spain, in 1481, and between 1481 and 1808, according to the historian Llorente, who had access to all the records of the Inquisition in his official character as secretary, the number of victims in Spain amounted to 341,021, of whom 37,912 were burned. The Inquisition of Spain cost that country at least 2,000,000 of lives. Saint Bartholomew's massacre cost France 100,000 of her best citizens.

EARTHQUAKES.

Sixty-one earthquakes have occurred on the coast of Chili. Three at Lisbon, capital of Portugal, in 1755, shook all the seas of Europe, the north of Africa, the West Indies, and even Lake Ontario. It lasted but six seconds, and destroyed 30,000 lives in Lisbon. In 1796 three-quarters of the city of Lima and 120,000 of its inhabitants were destroyed by an earthquake. In 1822 most of ————— was destroyed and 30,000 of its inhabitants.

NAPOLEON.

Napoleon one day visited a hospital he had founded for the maintenance of the daughters of those officers who had fallen in battle. The poor orphans crowded around him and thanked him for his kindness to them. He was so much affected that he burst into tears and exclaimed, "This is the happiest moment of my life."

Here is an important scrap clipped from a Christian paper :

BLOODY SWEAT.

“The bloody sweat spoken of in the last suffering of our Savior has been a subject of doubt to some ; but a correspondent of the *Boston Recorder*, in commenting upon that passage of the New Testament, where it is said of our Savior, that ‘he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground,’ gives the following instance from history, of a similar effect produced by excessive anguish or fear :

“Mezeray, the historian, thus describes the death of Charles IX, of France: ‘Nature exhibited strange freaks during the last two weeks of this monarch’s existence. From inward excitement of mind or soul, his body was frightfully agitated ; so much so, that the blood gushed from the pores of his flesh. At last, in the extreme weakness occasioned by these agitations, he yielded his soul.’ He also relates that a governor of a town, being sentenced to death, on beholding, for the first time, the gallows, experienced great agitation, that produced a profuse sweating of blood.

“Lombard mentions a general who experienced the same from losing a battle. He also tells of a nun, the most beautiful of the age, whose terror was so great, on falling into the power of a banditti, that it caused the blood to ooze from every pore.

“A lecture delivered to the Society of Arts at Haarlaam, in Europe, speaks of a person being prostrated on the deck of a ship by a storm, who, when raised, was found streaming with blood from the sur-

face. He was not wounded, but the phenomenon was occasioned by excitement of mind. In the same lecture, a widow was mentioned, who fancied she saw the apparition of her son supplicating her to release his soul from purgatory, by praying every Friday. On the ensuing Friday, while under extreme excitation of mind, a bloody perspiration covered her body. The same occurred every Friday, until she thought her task accomplished, after which her mind returned to its usual state, and the bloody sweat ceased."

He was an incessant student. He aimed to so store his knowledge that it could be made available. When presiding elder on the Peoria District, at the house of Rev. J. W. Agard, he arose early in the morning and built his own fire, and went to work at his books. This was his common practice.

He made many very warm friends. His sayings were stored away in the memory of ardent admirers. An illiterate, but devoted old Christian, many years ago, told the writer that "Elder Phelps once said in private conversation, that 'some people tempt the devil to tempt them.' " One will tell you when they last saw him; another, how he defended the cause of Christianity in a certain community; another remembers how grandly he sang the "OLD-FASHIONED BIBLE;" and many that

"I was baptized by him" at such a meeting. An indication of this esteem is manifested by the following :

ACROSTIC:

Regarded by the eternal Prince of Heaven,
 Endued with power to preach a Savior given,
 Vast is the torrent which before thee glows,
 And vast the source from whence that torrent flows.
 Spacious the field, important is the call,
 And grace is free to promulgate to all;
 Heaven owns thee, and will compensate thy pain,—
 Enforce the truth to man—A Savior slain.
 Lo, some have fallen! be not thou dismayed,
 Exquisite strength before thee is displayed.
 Promote his glory, satan's darts repel;
 He will His cause defend, thy foes he'll quell,
 Enlarge thy sphere the sacred rank to fill.
 Loud from on high the call, obey His will,
 Persuade the thoughtless, reprimand in love,—
 Stars shall thy crown adorn, in heaven above.

He was not a politician, yet he felt it to be his solemn duty to vote at all elections. On one occasion he drove a long distance in order to cast his vote; on reaching home he tied the lines to the fence, and reached the hall just in time to cast his vote for General Scott.

His manner was very impressive. He was deeply pious. Away in Mercer County, at my own boyhood home, on one bleak Winter day, a gentleman was ushered into our humble dwelling by my father. After an introduction

he hastily threw off his overcoat, and deliberately walked to a corner of the room and knelt down in prayer. He lingered a few minutes, and arose with quiet dignity and seated himself before the brightly burning fire. grace seemed to illuminate his countenance and "wait upon" every gesture and word. *Who is he?* There was something very remarkable; attractive, exhilarating, and captivating about him, that so completely charmed my youthful heart, that I sat in quiet wonder, and looked at him. I knew not a syllable of his greatness or goodness, I had heard him preach, probably, when I was a babe in my mother's arms, but I felt that we were in the presence of more than an ordinary Methodist preacher. Not unfrequently did the pioneer preachers of those days bless our humble home with their welcome visits; but here was a stranger who seemed good, great, gentle, sweet. I loved him. The repast was soon ready and over, the prayer offered, and blessing pronounced upon the family, and he had gone. This was the last time I ever saw him. He was then on his way from some point on the Mississippi River to the eastern portion of the Rock Island District. On that day he lost his road, and went some miles out of the

way and tarried at ———, with a stranger to him, who likewise was completely captivated. It was a privilege accorded to many Christian families in different parts of Illinois to entertain this man of God, and to treasure up some of his words of wisdom, and his favorite song, "The Old-fashioned Bible," thus became an especial favorite in Central Illinois.

He preached a sermon on "Walk About Zion," at Toulon, that almost bewildered the people with excitement. A brother who heard it, never hears the text read or sees it but that sermon comes right up before him, just as it was delivered on that occasion. It was the greatest sermon he ever heard from the lips of man.*

* Brother Tapp, to the author, May, 1878.

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

HIS LAST ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

Victoria Camp-meeting—A Scotch Presbyterian—Conference at St. Charles—Bishop Ames—The Three Illinois Conferences—Wisconsin Conference—Four Indiana Conferences—Former Co-laborers—His own Conference—J. Sinclair—Henry Summers—John Chandler—S. R. Beggs—H. Crews—Z. Hall—M. Bourn—J. Morey—J. L. Kirkpatrick—William Haney—Ora Walker—R. Haney—J. Luccock—Luke Hitchcock—Personal Mention—Close of the Conference—Details of his Quarterly-meetings—Letter from Dr. Golliday—Letter to J. Morey—Debate on Baptism—Elder Ketchum.

“We see but dimly through the mist and vapors,
Amid these earthly damps;
What seem to us but sad funereal tapers,
May be heaven's distant lamps.”

“There is a reaper whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.”

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE remainder of this Conference year his time was all occupied. He held several grove-meetings and attended a number of camp-meetings. At the Victoria Camp-meeting he preached from Ezek. xvii, 1-9. It was a wonderful sermon. The vast audience there seemed to be breathless with attention. Many

crowded up to the front, and stood as if entranced. A Scotch Presbyterian declared that it was the greatest sermon he had ever heard in any Church or country.

Conference met at St. Charles, Kane County, Illinois. Bishop E. R. Ames was the presiding officer. S. F. Denning was secretary. H. F. Martin, S. G. Havermale, C. M. Wright, and ten others were received on trial. Thirteen were ordained deacons, and nine were ordained elders. There had been an increase of two thousand and twenty-four. This Conference was peculiarly interesting to Mr. Phelps. Bishop Ames had come for the first time to preside over Rock River Conference. It was gratifying to meet his old friend in this relation to the Church so soon after his elevation the Episcopacy. This was the last session of the Rock River Conference that Elder Phelps would attend.

There were now three conferences in the State, with a total membership of 56,213 members and probationers. Iowa Conference was once included. Now it had a membership of 13,819. Wisconsin Conference had a total of 10,810. The four Indiana conferences, including probationers now numbered 73,840. Making a grand total of 153,986 members and

probations in what was the bounds of the old Illinois Conference. What a wonderful change had taken place since 1828, when the subject of this volume received his first appointment at the hands of a bishop. In Illinois Conference Peter Cartwright, Hadin Wallace, J. S. Barger, Peter Akers. W. J. Rutledge, and a few others were still at their posts, pushing the battle. In Southern Illinois Conference there were John Van Cleve, J. B. Corrington, J. A. Scarritt, W. L. Deneen, and a few others with whom he was formerly associated. In the North-west Indiana Conference were Richard Hargrave, J. L. Thompson, and Aaron Wood. In the South-eastern Indiana Conference Joseph Tarkington, Calvin Ruter, and Enoch G. Wood still lingered. Largely these Conferences were composed of strangers to the members of the old Illinois Conference. L. B. Dennis was in Missouri, T. M. Kirkpatrick was in Iowa, Chauncey Hobart, Boyd Phelps, W. G. Miller, and I. M. Leihy were in the Wisconsin Conference.

At this conference J. Sinclair was reappointed to the Chicago District. He was a good old man. Whilst Presiding Elder on the Rock Island District, he was requested to baptize a lady friend by immersion. He agreed to

do so early in the morning. In the presence of a few friends, he duly performed the solemn ceremony in the Mississippi River, near Hampton. Subsequently, whilst passing, he called out to her at the top of his voice, "Now, sister, you can go and join the Mormons," and then engaged in a good hearty laugh at her expense.

There was Henry Summers, grave, dignified, solid, his physical the exact representation of the whole man. In the pulpit he was practical and pointed, and when the emphatic point was made by the index finger it seemed to be clinched and forever riveted upon the heart of the listener. Once, when through the stringency of money interests, and the neglect of the stewards, his wants became pressing, he preached a rousing sermon on "Brick without straw." On one occasion, on going to his appointment, he found but one man and seven women present, whereupon he preached from "Seven women shall lay hold of one man, and shall say, We will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name." This sermon was never forgotten. His style was his own and could not be imitated. He always carried weight in his utterances in the pulpit and on the Conference floor. Thou-

sands in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin will bless his name in coming time.

Here was John Chandler, one of nature's noblemen. He was a historian, an inveterate reader and worker, an earnest advocate of entire sanctification, and the peculiar tenets and practices of the Methodist Episcopal Church. When Bishop Simpson was a fair-haired boy, he frequently took the bridle from the hands of father Chandler at his own boyhood home, and lead his horse to the barn, after receiving the dear man's kindly greeting, words of good cheer, and blessing. He could not endure stingy Methodists nor lazy preachers. In illustrating a sermon he once said, "The laziest man that I ever heard of would take his chair in the Summer days, and sit down at the south-west corner of the house in which he lived and moved little by little by the north until he finally ended the day at the south-east corner. He deplored the want of interest on the part of many Methodists in the subject of holiness. He affirmed that formerly it was expected that probationers would obtain this experience within six months after conversion."

Here was Stephen R. Beggs, who had broken up new territory in all parts of Illinois.

His sketch of early Methodism will aid to rescue from obscurity the names of many Methodist ministers whose record is on high. Hooper Crews was here. Large, stately, and possessing the voice of a Boanerges. A man whose presence was a sermon and whose word was law. Such a man was an honor to the Rock River Conference.

Zadock Hall was there also—quiet, firm, cautious. It had been his lot to make new charges, and “bark” his way as he went. Milton Bourn was there; and his presence was a benediction. William C. Cummings, too, was there—quiet, sweet, hopeful, cheerful, a real pioneer. John Morey was there—a philosopher, logician, and orator. His sermons on Universalism, Mormonism, Adventism, the Atonement and Resurrection, can never be forgotten by those who heard them. J. L. Kirkpatrick, who lived in the atmosphere of love, was there. And Wm. Haney, whose face was ever sunny with smiles or dewy with teardrops; and Ora A. Walker, whose name was a synonym for goodness.

There was Richard Haney, then in his prime—large, robust, with a face glowing like the full moon, ready to laugh or cry or make a speech as occasion might require. Many

amusing incidents are told of him. Preaching once at Monmouth, in describing the enslaved condition of the backslider, he said, "I'd be a lion, and shake my shaggy mane." At a camp-meeting near Knoxville he found a young man violating the rules of the meeting; he seized him, and carried him to the rear of the seats, and brought him down with a little more force than was agreeable to the youth's comfort, and said, "My son, do you know that your father had hold of you to-night?" Richard Haney was a man who would have been great in any age or country. His father was a prince in Israel, and trained four sons for the minstry. During Richard's school-boy days he was sent by the principal of the school to fill an appointment. Having concealed his position as a licentiate from his fellow-students, and also being somewhat mischievous, he expected to go to the appointment very secretly; but, to his surprise and mortification, he was overtaken by several loads of students, who cheered him, and, passing on, confronted him as he arose to preach from a text in Job. Young Haney read his text, and began: "Job—I say, Job—I say, *Job*,"—then paused, and exclaimed, with much solemnity, "Friends, I believe I am about to have an attack of the

bilious fever," and sat down. He became an orator; and the Methodists of those days never weary of relating camp-meeting incidents connected with Richard Haney.

Here was John Luccock, a champion debater, a terror to Universalists and immersionists, and a master of logic. Here also was Absalom Wooliscroft, the revivalist and singer, whose memory is embalmed in many hearts, and who should meet his brethren of Rock River Conference no more. Here was Luke Hitchcock, who needs no description, since his position as a General Conference officer has made Methodists throughout Christendom familiar with his name and success.

Many noble young men were there, who saw the face of A. E. Phelps for the last time in Conference. There were Flowers, Giddings, Baum, Swartz, Brooks, Ritchie, Lovesee, Rhodes, Bolles, Heath, Jewett, Stover, Stuff, Applebee, M'Kaig, Best, Keyes, Ransom, Mulfinger, Fields, Martin, Falkenbury, Stoughton, Miller. There were Denning, Fidler, Devore, and Roswell N. Morse, J. F. Chaffee, Henry Whitehead, S. Pillsbury, Abbot Goddard, G. G. Worthington, Philo Judson, S. P. Burr, F. Smith, W. J. Smith, J. W. Agard, R. H. Moffett, S. H. Stocking, J. J. Hedstrom, Bar-

ton H. Cartwright, John Grundy, C. W. Batchelor, Charles French, and others, who would never hear him answer at another "roll-call" of Rock River Conference on earth.

He was called upon to conduct the closing exercises of the Conference. He announced the hymn :

"And let our bodies part,
To different climes repair;"

which was sung with solemn tones, indicating that the time of separation had come. His prayer was appropriate and comprehensive. He prayed especially for that one who would never answer again on earth to the Rock River Conference roll-call.

He entered upon the work of his district with vigor. He preached at Princeton, on September 26th, from Matthew, fifth chapter, twentieth verse, and again, October 2d and 3d, from First Corinthians, third chapter, twenty-first and twenty-second verses, and the first Psalm. He spent October 9th and 10th at Prophetstown, and preached four times. On the 16th and 17th, he preached four times at Union Grove. He spent the 23d and 24th at Moline Quarterly-meeting. The 30th and 31st he spent with his dear friend, John Morey, at Rock Island. November 5th and 6th he was

at Camden, and preached four times. November 13th and 14th he spent at New Boston. On the 21st and 22d he was at Wethersfield, and preached on the Sabbath a most powerful sermon. On the clause, "All are yours," he dwelt with great pathos, until the audience were bathed in tears. November 27th and 28th he spent with his old friends at Lafayette, and preached with much liberty and feeling. He stated to several friends that he believed he would soon be called away to his home on high. On December 4th and 5th he held a quarterly-meeting at Henry, and preached on the Martyrdom of Stephen, the Prodigal Son, the First Psalm, and the Idlers in the Lord's Vineyard. At Dover, December 11th and 12th, he preached four times. On the 17th he was at Lamoiville. December 25th and 26th he spent in Princeton. The first Sabbath in January, 1853, found him at the Prophetstown Quarterly-meeting. Whilst here his daughter Emma was taken severely sick with convulsions; still he attended his meeting. The next quarterly-meeting occurred at the Union Grove Circuit, January 8th and 9th. Because of sickness, he could not reach the Moline Quarterly-meeting.

On January 4th he wrote to the Rev. W. P.

Golliday with reference to the work of the ministry, and wishing to secure him as a supply on the Indiantown work—now Tiskilwa—to which he received the following reply :

“ LACON, January 8, 1853.

“ DEAR BROTHER PHELPS,—Your letter of the 4th was received on the evening of the 6th, and I have delayed ~~my~~ reply only that I might give the subject that prayerful thought and attention demanded by its great importance. I believe I can now say to you that, if you think you can successfully sustain an application on my part for admission to the Annual Conference at its next session, I will go,—and by God’s grace do what I can for our holy religion. My reasons: I think it injudicious and improper for me to give up my profession for three, six, or nine months’ service on a circuit; but if there was a probability that, if recommended by a quarterly-conference, I could join the Annual Conference, and devote myself wholly hereafter to the work of the ministry, I would be willing to forego professional advantages and give up professional pursuits. If you can encourage me on this ground, I am ready to go immediately on receipt of your authority for me to do so.

“ Please write to me again, so that I can know how to act, and if you approve send me a plan of the circuit, or advise me where I can receive the necessary information. I would be pleased to see you, and if you can be at home at any time that I shall be (if I go on to Indiantown), I will be happy to call on you in Princeton. W. P. GOLLIDAY.”

He was deeply interested in young men who felt moved to preach the Gospel, and presented the applications of many such. We do double work when we induce those whom the Master has called to go and work in the Lord's vineyard.

On the 12th of January he wrote to Rev. J. Morey:

"DEAR BROTHER,—I drop a line to inform you that the probabilities are that I can not reach your quarterly-meeting, on account of the affliction of my family. Our youngest child has had very hard convulsions for nearly four weeks, and still she is living. Never before have we passed through such a scene of affliction. I shall be at your quarterly-meeting if it is the will of the Lord; but at present the prospect is as dark as midnight.

"In great haste, yours, A. E. PHELPS."

On January 15th and 16th he preached at Rock Island, from Matthew xiii, 38; Matthew xvi, 26; Acts xvii, 54-60. At Camden, now Milan, he preached from Luke xv, 18; Acts xvii, 54-60; Psalm xxiii.

About this time he held a public discussion with Rev. Mr. Ketchum, of the Baptist Church near Edgington, on the Subjects and Mode of Baptism. He was assisted on the first proposition by Rev. J. Luccock. Elder Ketchum

was assisted by Elder Gearheart. J. Morey* says, "In the judgment of a majority of the large audience present, brothers Phelps and Luccock carried each point triumphantly. 'This was the last time I ever saw Elder Phelps.'" D. Luccock† says, of the same debate, brother Phelps's arguments on baptism were almost irresistible.

Such a discussion tends to widen the breach between the armies of Immanuel. Elder Phelps was very loath to debate any subject of difference with sister Churches. When compelled to do so, he maintained a uniform spirit of kindness towards his opponents. Long after his death, Elder Ketchum spoke in terms of great respect for him as a disputant and Christian gentleman. He added: "I see many excellencies in your Church, now, that formerly I was not apprised of. We are all one in Christ. My work is nearly done." May his days, if he be still this side the river, end in peace.

* Letter to the author.

† Letter to the author.

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

LAST LABORS—SICKNESS—DEATH.

Had become a Leader—Family Affliction—Tenderness in Preaching—Unusually Busy—At Hennepin—Mr. Whitney—Numerous Calls—Church Dedication at Cedar Point—Brother Collins—Last Quarterly meeting—Last Sermon—A Skeptic—At J. Wickson's—Rev. J. Cole—Goes Home Sick—Martin F. Sweet—Death—Funeral—Funeral at Conference—Sermon by H. Crews—J. V. Watson.

"Beyond the gathering and the strowing,

I shall be soon ;

Beyond the ebbing and the flowing,

Beyond the coming and the going,

I shall be soon—

Love, Rest, Home.

Beyond the parting and the meeting,

I shall be soon ;

Beyond the farewell and the greeting,

Beyond this pulse's fever beating,

I shall be soon—

Love, Rest, Home."

H. BONAR.

THE close of such a career as has been briefly outlined in these pages brings sadness to the heart. Elder Phelps was now in his prime. His mind was thoroughly stored with such knowledge as could be made available at all times. He still kept up his habits

of study, and was now well fitted for any position at the disposal of a bishop's cabinet. He had become a leader in the Church, and filled the positions to which he was called with eminent ability. His family affliction continued. His little Emma was in his mind during his absence from home night and day. At home he sat wearily by her side, and fondled her. At times he most earnestly prayed to God to take him, if need be, but to spare his darling child. He was much careworn. When on his district his anxiety was intense. Still he moved forward in the discharge of the important duties of his office with his accustomed zeal. His preaching was unusually tender and impressive.

Some mention should be made of the faithful laymen who were his co-laborers, who as he went from each appointment took his hand for the last time. Prominent among all who might be named was David Bruner, a local preacher. A worthier man than he is seldom found anywhere. He was a prince. His sermon on the Land of Houlah, at a camp-meeting, will live as long as memory endures. There was Abner Abbott, a physical giant, and who was actually called upon to use his strength in defense of our rights as a Church. He was converted at

family prayers, and scarcely knew what he was doing for an hour. When the calm came, he found himself sitting down, and praising God at the top of his voice. There was James Garret, whose name is like ointment poured out. When seeking religion, the "last thing he knew he fell back in despair." The "first thing he knew again" was when he "felt his hands come together." He was a shining example of "perfect love." There was Dr. J. Neal: although unsteady, he was a man of good intentions, and a most ardent advocate of Methodism. Elder Phelps was his idol. He never wearied of talking of him. Judge Spencer, of Rock Island, was one of his firm friends, and a noble man was he. General Thomas, of Wyoming, who served in the "War of 'Twelve," was also a friend to the Church and to the subject of this sketch. Rev. William Doughty, of New Boston, was a man who helped the cause of Methodism in those early times; and there was Dr. Herald, whose life was a religious commentary, and whose face ever beamed with joyfulness. Father Welch deserves mention. In the Old Country he preached each Sabbath, and often walked twenty miles doing so. He was once at Conference, where he was met by a most

eccentric old brother from Knoxville, when the following conversation ensued :

Brother —— to brother W. "Are you a Christian?"

Brother W. "Oh yes; for many years."

Brother ——. "Are you a Methodist?"

Brother W. "Yes, I am a Methodist."

Brother ——. "Are you a good Methodist?"

Brother W. "Well, I will leave that to brother Sullivan." *

The old gentleman here referred to was a remarkable man of faith, and full of the Holy Ghost. He used to pray, "O Lord, have mercy on the wretched, miserable, God-for-saken, hell-deserving, heaven-defying, hair-hung, and breath-shaken sinner!"

Time would fail if we should speak of all the worthy men of those days who were co-laborers. Here was a humble man, who shouted by day and by night. Often, when milking, he would forget and shout for joy, and then coax up to the affrighted cow, only to repeat the same again and again. Dr. Lyford, of Port Byron, George Norton, of Neponset, J. B. Brown, Father Williams, of Moline, and a host of others, and a noble army of sisters, whose names are in the records of

* Himself an earnest and worthy Methodist.

God, deserve mention. There was such an host of "mothers in Israel" who wrought in the vineyard, that to mention any would be injustice to others.

The Methodist women of those days were very positive in their testimony, and they "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods" for the cause of the Master. Many of these esteemed Presiding Elder Phelps very highly for his untiring zeal for the Church. Crowds waited upon his ministry. These all would soon see him no more on earth.

"One morn I missed him on the 'customed hill;
Along the heath, and near his favorite tree
Another came—nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood, was he." *

Out of the bounds of his district were also numerous friends, such as A. Lunt, Professor Pinckney, brothers Bishop, Sheriff, Swarts, Waggoner, who stood in their lot and wrought nobly in the field. Of such friends Mr. Phelps had many. With some he had formed an acquaintance only on public occasions; with others he had labored as pastor, agent, or presiding elder. Some years ago the writer met one of these special friends,† who insisted on cutting his hair precisely as Elder Phelps had worn

* Gray.

† Mr. Asher Smith.

his in an early day. Of course he did not prevail. The reader may easily imagine the depth of grief that swept these hearts a few weeks later.

At some of his appointments his sermon most powerfully moved the people. Many of the preachers of his district were engaged in protracted meetings, and his services were constantly in demand. Affliction and incessant labors were telling fearfully upon his nervous system. In the love-feast his personal narrations were pathetic and moving. In preaching he seemed unusually happy. It was the bright flash of the expiring flame. On the twenty-first day of March, if living, he would be forty-seven years old.

"Over the river they beckon me,
Loved ones who 've crossed on the farther side;
The gleam of their snowy robes I see,
But their voices are lost in the dashing tide.

"I shall know the loved who have gone before,
And joyfully sweet will the meeting be,
When over the river, the peaceful river,
The angel of death shall carry me." *

And he did not wait long.

During the entire month of February, he was very busy and his family was still sick. Thus

* N. A. W. Priest.

he was taxed to the utmost of his strength.* On March 3d he started on his way to dedicate the Cedar Point Church. The day was cold. He was delayed some time at the crossing of the Illinois River at Hennepin. He entered the office of D. Markley, a worthy member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Hennepin, since gone home too, late in the afternoon, and sat warming himself, when Mr. Whitney entered the office also, and was introduced. He seemed to be smarting still under his terrible defeat in July, 1852. When introduced to Mr. Phelps, he manifested a spirit of bitterness and declined to shake hands with him. They sat down and conversed about the late debate for a short time, and then Elder Phelps went out and made twenty pastoral calls and returned in time for tea. Mr. Whitney afterward referred to his cold reception of Mr. Phelps with much feeling, and confessed that he had done wrong. The next morning D. Markley shook hands with him for the last time.

On March 6th he dedicated the Methodist Episcopal Church at Cedar Point, near Peru, Ill. Rev. R. N. Morse was pastor. He says his dedicatory sermon was delivered with very

* He omitted to note down his texts for several weeks, probably for want of time.

great power and unction. In the evening he preached from "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" An influential man present remarked to the pastor: "Elder Phelps has swept away my last excuse, and left nothing whatever to stand upon." He tarried over night with brother Collins, the father of Rev. Wm. Collins, of Central Illinois Conference. During the morning he complained of being unusually exhausted, and while conducting the family devotions he fainted. On recovering he was urged to tarry until better able to go home. Against this he protested, and proceeded on his journey to his quarterly-meeting. On Saturday he preached from Matt. xx, 6. On Sabbath he preached from Isa. 5, 4: "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" This text is the last one recorded. He preached again at night on the destruction of the earth by fire. A brother* who heard it says Mr. Phelps spoke for two hours and fifteen minutes. It was a remarkable sermon. A skeptic asked the pastor how long Mr. Phelps had preached, and when informed of the great length of the

* Father Cole, now of Tiskilwa.

discourse, he said: "I would have bet fifty dollars that he had not spoken to exceed a half hour, had I not kept the time myself. I could have listened to him all night." *This was his last sermon.* At the close of the meeting he told his friends that he was sick, and that his work was done. However, the next day he was better.

This quarterly-meeting was his last. It was held in Sinclair Chapel. It was appropriate that he should close his labors in a church edifice named in honor of his old colleague and presiding elder. He spent the night at the house of Jesse Wickson. On Monday, March 9th, he was accompanied to his home in Princeton by kind friends. He assisted in putting away his horse, and then went in and took his bed. He told his wife and children he had come home to die. His friends did not at first consider him very dangerously sick. They knew he had been utterly overtaxed, and supposed that in a few days he would "rally." In this they were disappointed. He was much of the time delirious, and whispered in a manner that excited their deepest solicitude. Rev. John Cole called to see him. He asked him to read the Bible and pray. At one time he called for the reading of the ninetieth Psalm.

Rev. Martin T. Sweet called upon him frequently and prayed in his behalf.

His next quarterly-meeting occurred on the Lamoille Circuit, March 15th, 16th. Of course he was absent. He drew up a brief statement of his secular affairs. Then he grew rapidly worse. When conscious he spoke hopefully and cheerfully of the future. He knew that death was at his side to claim him as his prey. He was calm and happy. Would that his dying words could be recorded. His interest in his family was touching. This was the only link that bound him to earth. He became wholly unconscious and sank rapidly; and on Wednesday, March 20th, he breathed his last. He passed away as quietly as an infant.

The funeral services were conducted by Rev. Martin T. Sweet. He preached an able and appropriate sermon from 2 Tim. iv, 6. There is no outline of this sermon at hand, or to be obtained. Rev. F. Smith was present, and sat as a mourner. Many friends from adjoining charges were there to look at him for the last time. D. Markley drove over from Hennepin. It was a sad occasion. One of the hymns was sung to "China." One who was present thought that tune had never seemed so mournfully sweet before. The second

hymn "Servant of God, well done," made a deep impression upon all present.

The Methodist Episcopal Church had rarely been so crowded on such an occasion. The large audience were deeply moved.

After the services at the church his remains were followed by an immense crowd of weeping friends, and laid away to sleep in the Princeton Cemetery. His death made a deep impression on the public mind in Central Illinois. The tragic death of Rev. A. Wooliscroft during the same year added to the general gloom. He had returned from his appointment to his home. Was unwell, and took, as he supposed, a dose of magnesia. It proved to be arsenic instead, and produced death in a short time. He, too, was much beloved. He had traveled extensively in Kentucky and Ohio, and had come to spend his "Autumn" in Rock River Conference. A public discussion had been talked of for several years in Mercer County with Universalists. Mr. Phelps was named as the proper man to represent our Church. Now he had fallen.*

* Rev. John Luccock finally championed the cause of orthodoxy, and so completely discomfited Rev. Wm. Riley, that he gave up preaching and became a lawyer. He has long since gone to meet his judge.

Several quarterly conferences passed resolutions of condolence. The following was transmitted to Mrs. Charlotte Phelps by Rev. C. M. Wright:

“DEAR SISTER,—The following preamble and resolutions were unanimously passed by the Quarterly-meeting Conference of Moline Circuit, Rock Island District, Rock River Conference, April 3, 1853, at Moline:

“*Whereas*, it has pleased the GREAT HEAD of the Church to remove by death our worthy and much loved Presiding Elder, the Rev. A. E. Phelps; therefore, we, the members of the Quarterly-meeting Conference, Moline Circuit, Rock Island District, Rock River Conference, *resolve*,

“1. That we deeply regret the loss which we, not only as a circuit and district, but as a Church have sustained.

“2. We also feel to mourn and sympathize with his afflicted family in their bereavement.

“3. That we will forward to his widow his full claim for the current quarter.

“4. That a copy of the above be forwarded to sister Phelps, and also to the *Northwestern Christian Advocate* and *Western Christian Advocate* for publication. Signed in behalf of the conference.

“C. M. WRIGHT, *President*.

“E. F. ARCULARIUS, *Secretary*.”

The Lafayette Circuit passed similar resolutions. The Rock Island District was in mourning. The vacancy was filled by the

appointment of Rev. John Chandler, who succeeded him on the district.* A vacancy had occurred on the Lafayette Circuit, the junior preacher having gone home. The place was filled by Rev. J. S. Cummings. This was a result very gratifying to his old leader and friends at Wyoming.

Conference was held in Clark Street Church, Chicago, Illinois. Bishop Scott presided; P. Judson was chosen secretary. At the first roll call eighty-eight members responded. When the name "A. E. Phelps" was called, a solemn silence ensued. As the call continued, the name of "Absalom Wooliscroft" likewise was followed by the stillness of death, more eloquent than the words of the orator or the creations of art. The Conference set apart an hour for the memorial services, which were conducted by Rev. H. Crews. Rev. J. V. Watson made touching reference to the solemn occasion in the *Northwestern Christian Advocate*, of which he was then the accomplished editor, as follows:

≡ REV. H. CREWS.

"A sermon was preached by this brother, at the late Rock River Conference, on the deaths of brothers Phelps and Wooliscroft, which we had designed

* Rev. F. Smith's letter to the author, May 27, 1878.

to hear, but was disappointed. We have several times heard the sermon alluded to as being pertinent, appropriate, and impressive. One of our correspondents referring to the sermon, describes a reference made in it to the lamented Phelps:

“ ‘Brother Phelps had a good Christian mother, who often spoke to him of the Savior. But this mother died, and the disconsolate boy began to think of those things his mother had told him. He wished to be a Christian. The most Christian person he knew of was an old negro, whom he supposed to be pious. To him young Phelps went for consolation; but the old negro told him boys were not old enough to be religious until they were twelve years old—Phelps was ten. Phelps thought the negro ought to know and believed him, but waited with anxious solicitude for the time to come when he could be a Christian. He did not forget it, and longed for the day when he might give himself to God, as many a boy has for the day when he should be twenty-one. At last the day rolled around when he would be twelve. On the morning of his birthday he arose very early, and kneeling at his bedside, dedicated himself to God. He never, from that day until his death, took back the sacrifice. . . . After brother Phelps came to manhood, an old fortune-teller told him he would become rich and then fall away into sin, and so be lost. Property gathered around him, and sometimes fears would come up lest the old hag might have spoken the truth. But she was wrong for once, for he died in the triumphs of faith.’ ”

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

PEN-PORTRAITURES BY CO-LABORERS.

Sketch by Rev. H. Ritchie—Rev. Francis Smith—Rev. U. P. Golliday—Rev. Z. Hall—Rev. R. Haney.

“Is not e’en death a gain to those
Whose lives to God were given?
Gladly they close their eyes on earth
To open them in heaven.”

“Well done, good and faithful servant.”

THE Rev. H. Ritchie was intimately acquainted with Mr. Phelps, and after his decease conducted several public discussions to a successful issue. He served two terms in the eldership, and was twice called to represent his brethren in the General Conference.

Rev. F. Smith was also intimately associated with Mr. Phelps, and after his decease served two terms in the eldership, and met in discussion several able opponents of our doctrine with good success. Rev. Z. Hall was a pioneer co-laborer with the lamented Phelps. His simple narrative will be read with interest. Rev. R. Haney was intimate with the subject

of this volume for nearly a quarter of a century. He needs no description. Rev. U. P. Golliday, M. D., of the Des Moines Conference was for a time also intimately associated with Mr. Phelps, and his statement will repay a careful reading.

Rev. H. RITCHIE says:

“Among the treasures preserved in the Church for usefulness are the recorded lives and labors of holy men. Protestants have no saints to be worshiped as tutelary divinities. Yet they do find in the Bible records of good men ‘whose faith’ we are commanded ‘to follow; considering the end of their conversation—manner of life—Jésus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.’ They therefore approve the recording of good deeds performed by eminent men, to live and to speak when their authors are dead.

“Methodism has contributed largely to such Christian literature. Yet when we remember the host of worthies she has produced, these records are not too numerous. Many a life poem is yet unsung. The itinerant system, for the first seventy-five years of its American history, by its toil and exposure developed a moral heroism unsurpassed in modern annals. These noble men crossed mountains, swam rivers, forcing their way through trackless forests, and across untrodden prairies amid the frosts of Winter and the scorching heat of Summer. They were often exposed to the attacks of wild beasts and savage men. They were actuated by the same martyr

spirit that in earlier ages induced men to lay down their lives upon the block or amid the tortures of the rack or flames. Our own Illinois has furnished men worthy of being enrolled with this immortal company. Among the number are Jesse Walker, Smith L. Robinson, John Dew, A. E. Phelps, John Sinclair, Peter Cartwright, Peter Akers, and Henry Summers. Except the last two named, all these have passed away. The survivors bring to each session of the Illinois and Central Illinois Conferences a benediction by their presence.

“Among our departed brethren, whether considered as a man, a preacher, or an officer of the Church, none is more worthy of honorable mention than the subject of this biography,—the lamented Asahel Elihu Phelps. In the delineation of the character of a man, whom I loved more devotedly than any save my own relatives, I can scarce trust myself as a contributor. The partiality of personal friendship may lead me into excessive eulogy. But most of all do I distrust my ability to do justice to his character.

“As a preacher, brother Phelps would have been, and would be to-day, a man of mark in any conference in the connection. This is true not merely of a few and special efforts, but of his regular ministrations. He was an indefatigable student. All his sermons were prepared with laborious care. In examining his sketches, some years after his death, I was deeply impressed by the evidence of their frequent revision. His manner of delivery was easy and natural. There was an entire absence of all mannerism, or peculiarity of tone, or affectation of

any kind. His utterance, though rapid, was distinct; and such was the skill and melody of his voice that, once heard, it never could be forgotten. He was a preacher of good judgment. He adapted his theme to the necessities of his congregation, if in any good degree informed of their character and surroundings. Few men were happier in this regard than he. Always impressive, he enlisted the interest of his audience, and held it to the end. The effect was the same, whether amid the thousands gathered at the camp-meeting on the Sabbath, or the few in a private house.

“Theological controversy was at its height in his day. Then, as now, ‘all sorts of men were preaching all sorts of doctrines.’ Through the press these errorists could not be dealt with so successfully then as now. Indeed, the great mass of men could not be thus reached at all. The charity of brother Phelps was not of the kind that allows ‘truth to fall in the streets’ for want of a defender. In sermons and public debates he did immense service to the cause of truth. In debate he was a model. His statement of propositions was so clear and precise as to defy successful caviling. His courtesy to opponents was so uniform as always to win their respect. He never allowed himself to exhibit bad temper, even when provoked by the rudest personal assaults; and he never descended to any thing of the kind himself. He stated the arguments of an opponent in his own words, and placed upon them the most obvious construction.

“As an administrator of discipline he was strict, but not harsh. Believing that it was the mission of

the Church to save men, he would forbear, and advise forbearance, as long as there was hope. But when it became evident that an offender must be dealt with or the Church must suffer, he permitted no sentimental pity to prevent a faithful discharge of duty.

“As a presiding elder he was equally careful to secure a faithful performance of duty on the part of the ministers and to secure an ample supply of their wants.

“As a man our brother had a marked individuality. He copied none but Christ. He possessed a genuine manhood. I have often thought that this matter is lost sight of in admitting men to conference membership. We receive men who, with piety and pulpit ability, yet make themselves contemptible in the eyes of the people in their social relations and business transactions. Despised themselves for little and unworthy deeds, the cause too often is made to suffer with them. Nothing of this kind could be said of our beloved friend. There was nothing in his nature sordid or selfish. He desired his salary to be paid because he had earned it, but neither made nor allowed unmanly appeals to secure from the people what their sense of justice failed to bring. He enjoyed the esteem of the people, and especially that of his brethren of the ministry, but without any improper arts and unworthy devices to obtain it. Hence he never identified himself with any of the popular outside organizations, to gain money, position, or influence other than what his merits properly deserved.

“He was a positive character. Being of an ar-

dent temperament and of strong convictions, he was not the man to purchase popularity by prudent silence. If a question had two sides he made his choice. He was no 'fence-viewer.' If wrong was likely to succeed, or right to fail, his voice was sure to be heard. And when the vote was taken on such questions he never failed to "show his hand," even when in a lean minority.

"As a friend he was true as gold tried in the fire. As long as he believed a man worthy he would stand by him, no matter who were against him.

"Of brother Phelps in his domestic relations I can not speak, as it was never, during his life time, my privilege to visit his family. But from others, who were acquainted with him in this relation, I learn that as a husband and father he was as near a model example as is ordinarily met with in this sinful world.

"This outline of character would be imperfect did I fail to mention what seemed to me the point of weakness. He was too sensitive of his reputation. Would it not be well for one to leave the care of even this valuable treasure to God and his friends? But without defects he could not share human nature; and where so many excellencies meet we can easily overlook a defect in such a character.

"His industry was truly exemplary. More literally than any other man that I have known, he was 'never unemployed, never triflingly employed.' To him 'life was real, life was earnest,' and every waking hour was devoted to hard work or diligent study. He died in his forty-seventh year, yet had he lived long, because he had lived well."

Rev. FRANCIS SMITH says :

“Rev. A. E. Phelps was attractive in person, rather over medium height, slender and straight as an Indian. He had dark hair, large gray eyes, with high, full forehead, and symmetrical features, throughout; was lithe, and quick of motion. To a stranger or superficial observer he appeared stiff and unapproachable; but upon closer observation and more thorough acquaintance all such impressions vanished, and the reverse was found to be true in an eminent degree. In fact, he was one of the most affable and approachable men I have ever known.

“As a husband and father, he was affectionate and kind, almost to a fault. Some of his friends believe he fell a martyr to this passion for his family. In his dealings with men, he was conscientious, scrupulously honest, and benevolent to a degree worthy of imitation.

“As a Christian, he was ardent, yet consistent. His piety was not like the meteor flash, with its momentary glare, without warmth and force, but was like the real flame, possessed of light, heat, and power. In the later years of his life he seemed to be wholly swallowed up in God, and he might justly have said, ‘The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.’

“As a laborer in the Master’s vineyard, he was a model in no ordinary degree. Whether serving in the agency of our literary institutions, in the pulpit, or at the altars of the Church, he was seldom equaled, and scarcely ever surpassed. He gave more hours to his legitimate work than any man I have ever

known. He read all our standard works, besides many miscellaneous books. He was a 'scribe thoroughly instructed unto the kingdom of heaven.' It was his custom to scatter the literature of the Church over his large circuits and districts like the leaves of Autumn. Probably no man of modern times has left more good books in the families of the Church than did he. I have often coveted his gifts and success in that direction.

"His business habits were such as always give success. He did not, like too many, wait for something to turn up, but he was always *turning up something* that enabled him to compass his object. He was punctual, prompt, diligent, energetic, to the last degree, in all of his undertakings; hence his brethren and the Church never anticipated or wrote failure with reference to what was laid upon or required at the hands of this faithful man of God, but, 'Well done, thou faithful servant.'

"As an administrator, he was prompt, mild, and accurate. He presided in his quarterly-conferences with dignity, and yet with so much urbanity that the least of all his brethren felt they were respected and appreciated by him. He was none of your negative or non-committal characters, but always assumed responsibilities that legitimately belonged to the position he occupied; and if he erred at all, as an administrator, it was in the direction of mercy.

"As a defender of the faith, he had but few peers, and no superiors. He was fair and conscientious in all of his controversies with theological opponents, always aiming to get at their real positions, and then meeting them with sound logic, and conceding their authorities. If he was under the neces-

sity of meeting fling or sally of wit, he would do it with such a keen lance that the hopeless victim would rather relish than complain of his utter discomfiture. His discussions were conducted for the vindication of truth, and not for personal victory. He seemed to be, and doubtless was, actuated by the feeling that we can not afford to excel our friends in argument only, but in the manifestation of the Christian spirit also. The results of all his discussions seemed to be salutary. They were not bootless contests, in which Samson not only slew his enemies, but also killed himself. As an evidence of the good effect of these debates, whenever it was known he was to preach in these communities subsequently, his former opponents had such respect for his ability as an expounder of God's Word, and such confidence in his moral integrity, that they came, far and near, and in mass, to attend on his ministrations. He was frequently invited to their pulpits on such occasions. At the close of a nine days' discussion in the Christian church at Coalbrook, they granted him the use of their church for the baptism of infants, and the whole body of 'Disciples' remained to witness the ceremony. As long as we had A. E. Phelps to champion our cause we felt perfectly secure.

"As a preacher, he could hardly be classed either with Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, and yet he possessed some of the most striking characteristics of all of them. He spoke rapidly, and would utter more words in a given time than any speaker I have ever listened to; and yet each sentence was clear cut, and each word distinctly uttered. Unlike most rapid speakers, his tone was not monotonous, but his voice

was well modulated. He was perfectly self-possessed, and yet at times impassioned in the highest degree. He was never nonplused or disconcerted. He excelled in the command of words, incidents, and authorities, and seemed to have on hand an exhaustless reserve fund for all occasions. In retort, repartee, and ready reply, he was unrivaled. In preaching his matter was mainly Biblical, but he would call to his aid art, science, history. He made all realms subservient to his bidding. An incident illustrative of this occurred on the camp ground near Lafayette, Ill. While preaching from the first Psalm, when he reached the clause, 'He shall not stand in the judgment,' there was a fearful thunder-storm approaching, of which he took advantage with wonderful facility and power, until the stoutest hearts quailed under his mighty appeals. The logical, rhetorical, and hortatory were blended in his ministrations. Sometimes one and then the other would predominate, as occasion might demand. I close in the language of a very intelligent lady of another denomination, who, on hearing of his decease, exclaimed, with quivering lip and tearful eye, 'I never expect to hear or look upon his like again.' Truly, when A. E. Phelps went down 'there fell a mighty man and a prince in our Israel.' God help me and my brethren to emulate his virtues!"

Dr. U. P. GOLLIDAY knew Elder Phelps well, and wrote to the author, June 8, 1878:

"DEAR BROTHER,—As I recollect Elder Phelps, he was about five feet eight or ten inches in height, of a

slim build, without a redundancy of flesh, yet muscular enough for symmetry of form, lithe and active in both mind and body. As a preacher, argumentative rather than emotional, eloquent always, sometimes pathetic, arousing an audience to a high degree of feeling and enthusiasm, clear and forcible in his presentation of truth, convincing the judgment and enlightening the mind.

“In private life, genial and social, of fine conversational powers, which, from his extensive and intimate acquaintance with men and things, rendered him an agreeable and desirable member of a circle of friends.

“In debate, he was dignified and courteous, never descending to the vulgar ruse of ridicule or perversion in treating the argument of an opponent; but having due regard for the amenities of debate, as well as in the more intimate relations of private life, he seemed disposed to treat with respectful consideration the argument as well as the person of the party opposed to him. The debate between Elders Phelps and Barr was held at Henry, in Marshall County, Ill., commencing June 22d, and closing July 1, 1852.* A Rev. Mr. M’Kinney came with Elder Barr, from some point in the eastern part of the State, I think from Danville. He, with myself, and another person whose name I do not now recollect, were chosen moderators. Elder Barr represented the Christian Church, known in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky as the New Light body. They were reputed to be the followers of Barton W. Stone, at one time a Presbyterian minister of Kentucky, but who, about

* The reader will find full description *in loco*.

1804, after having for years rejected the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism, and, yielding to the forces of speculative reasoning in which he and others indulged, were led eventually to reject also the doctrine of the Atonement, the Divinity of Christ, and the Trinity. The debate was generally known, and had been talked of for months; and, as Elder Barr had acquired considerable notoriety, and brother Phelps occupied an exalted position in the estimation of the people, a very great interest was felt in the public mind.

“The youngest child of brother Phelps was taken seriously ill with brain fever, as was supposed, a short time previous to the debate. From this cause he felt compelled to return to his home in Bureau County frequently, by which he was not only subjected to very great inconvenience, but his anxiety—it was feared by his friends—would interfere with the debate, by rendering him unable to throw the whole power of his mind into it. Elder Barr, though in general a courteous debater, at one time took occasion to intimate, in unmistakable terms, that the solicitude manifested by brother Phelps was assumed to cover a conscious sense of weakness in his cause, and consequent defectiveness in his argument. Yet, notwithstanding the disadvantage under which he was placed by his anxiety of mind, loss of rest, and time necessary to review his own ground as well as the arguments of his opponent, brother Phelps so closely pursued him, and so firmly maintained his own position, that he felt it necessary to call in the assistance of Rev. N. Summerbell. Brother Phelps called in the aid of Rev. John Luccock, who had even then acquired considerable notoriety as a debater. I never

heard of Mr. Summerbell, until in connection with that discussion, and, though hearing of him occasionally, have no recollection of ever meeting him since. As a debater, Mr. Summerbell was far from being as courteous as was Elder Barr. He was particularly given to making unjust representations of the arguments and doctrinal views of Trinitarians. Speaking of brother Phelps and the views he held in reference to the Trinity, he at one time said, 'We believe in one God, but they will cut up their God and label the pieces, calling them Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.'

"Elder Luccock, the assistant of brother Phelps (now Dr. Luccock, of Atlantic, Cass County, Iowa), was in the prime of life, of quick, vigorous thought and apprehension, of a sound critical judgment and superior argumentative powers.

"Years have passed since that time, but the flavor of Summerbell's peculiar rhetoric has lost none of its original distastefulness. Perhaps the striking contrast between his unsavory speeches and the more courteous bearing of Elder Barr, served to intensify the disagreeable features of Summerbell's manners. There were those, however, who regarded Elder Barr as being very tame and insipid, as compared with their favorite champion. Strongly as I may seem to have spoken of Summerbell, I have refrained from a full expression of my memory of his part in that debate—of the coarse abuse and ridicule he heaped upon the doctrine of the Trinity and of those who held and taught it.

Elder Phelps was genial, polite, candid. These excellencies of his character were never, perhaps,

more severely taxed or disturbed than by the coarseness of expression and the occasional sing-song tone peculiar to a certain class of preachers of the olden time, sometimes adopted by Mr. Summerbell. But when we consider how much his affectionate, sensitive nature must have suffered from the distress and anxiety naturally caused by the illness of his child, and his deep sympathy with the suffering of its anxious mother, we are surprised that he was able to maintain the serenity of mind and achieve the success which he did. It was either during the closing days of the debate, or within a short time after it, that brother Phelps said to the writer: 'My child, I think, will not die, but I will be taken instead. I expect to live but a little while longer.' He then appeared in usual health, and, in reply to the inquiry why he spoke as he did, he said, substantially, 'The very life of the mother seems so wrapt up in that, her youngest child, and she is so unwilling to give it up, that I have made it a matter of special prayer. At one time, while so engaged, the question seemed impressed upon my mind, whether I would be willing to give my life for the child's. After a moment's thought,' he continued, 'I felt, rather than said, Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done; but, for the mother's sake, and for the life of her child, I could even yield my own, if thou requirest. The impression then came, the life of the child will be given, but thou wilt be called instead.' "

Rev. Z. HALL says:

"My first acquaintance with the Rev. A. E. Phelps was in the Fall of 1833, at the Conference

which was held at brother Padfield's, three miles from Lebanon, the seat of M'Kendree College. I met with him and his young companion, for they had been married but a short time. He was a prominent young member of the Illinois Conference. This was its second session after the Indiana Conference had been set off. The first was held in Jacksonville in 1832, where I was received on trial. Brother Phelps was one of the forty-four members called upon to supply all the State of Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin. In the Fall of 1835 he was sent to Pekin Circuit with brother M'Murtry as colleague. It was bounded as follows: South by the Mackinaw River, west by the Illinois River, north by the Vermilion River, and east by the Grand Prairie, a four weeks' circuit, and he was returned to it in 1836. One of his week-day appointments was in my house (in the same room in which I am now writing this sketch, in November, 1877, Woodford County, Illinois). He was always a very welcome guest to the little class; for one of brother Phelps's principles was to fulfill his appointments at the time and hold class-meeting after preaching.

"When he was presiding elder of Peoria District I had an opportunity to become more fully and intimately acquainted with him at home, in his family, and how he lived every day at home. He was my presiding elder for the years 1843 and 1844. I was on the Washington Circuit. We both lived in Washington, and were near neighbors, and our families were very intimate. Scarcely a day passed but some of the family were at our house or some of us were at his house, so that we had a full oppor-

tunity to know and love one another. Now, after the passing by of thirty-three years, I look upon the two years in which he was my presiding elder in Washington as among the happiest of my itinerant life.

“Brother Phelps was a very industrious man. It was said of him in Washington, where he lived during the four years of his presiding eldership, that he would hurry home, put away his horse, and before he sat down in his own house he would have a book in his hand, so that he could glance at it while conversing with his family.

“He was very punctual to attend his quarterly-meetings. I do not recollect of one that he was absent from during the two years he was presiding elder. He preached with great acceptability and to the delight of his hearers. I heard him debate a few times. He succeeded well. He was truly an eloquent and able defender of the doctrines of our Church. But I hardly need to speak of his ability as a debater, he always manifested the right spirit and left his hearers feeling that he had honored the truth and gained a decided victory over his opponents. He succeeded in all the relations he was called to sustain in the Conference.

“I have known him as a circuit preacher, station preacher, presiding elder, and agent of Mount Morris Seminary. In all these he did well. My opinion is that his success may be attributed to his purity of life. He has not left a stain upon his character, either ministerially or socially. I hope and expect to meet him in heaven.”

Rev. R. HANEY, D. D., Monmouth, Illinois, says:

“The religion of our Lord Jesus Christ has required sacrifices of all who have embraced it in all ages of the world. The Master himself, though Lord and of all, took upon him the form of a servant, Moses refused the crown of Egypt, and the Moravian missionaries sold themselves to the planters of the West Indies for the privilege of preaching Christ to master and slave. Whoever studies the history of that form of Christianity now spreading over the face of the earth, called by Dr. Chalmers “Christianity in earnest,” that is Methodism, will find that our Church is no exception to the general rule. Asbury, our first bishop, and the first on the Western Continent who crossed and recrossed the Alleghany Mountains seventy-eight times on foot or horseback, gave his shirt to the ferryman for crossing him and his brethren over the river, the money having given out. And Bishop Roberts and the late Rev. John Chandler subsisted for days on blackberries, having no money with which to purchase food. From St. Paul to Peter Cartwright, the men who laid the foundations of civil and religious liberty, and let the struggling millions of earth into the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free, cheerfully gave up every thing for Christ. During the first three centuries, while the heralds of salvation itinerated and were poor and went every-where preaching Christ and him crucified, Christianity spread rapidly; but when Constantine heaped riches upon the ministers of the Gospel and popularized religion, the

Church lost her power and a long night of darkness followed.

“Among the men who came early to the West and cheerfully brooked the trials and sufferings incident to the settling of a new country, and whose memory is as ointment poured forth, A. E. Phelps must ever be assigned a prominent place, for though ‘being dead’ he ‘yet speaketh.’ When I first saw this eloquent and now sainted brother, he was a member of the old Illinois Conference, and though young, his brethren assigned him to fields of great labor and responsibility, and to the day of his death he never waned in their estimation or lost their confidence. From his parents he inherited a feeble constitution, and how he did so much work, and did it so well, was a wonder to all who knew him. He was about five feet ten inches high. His step was quick and he seemed ever in a hurry. Of him it may be truly said, ‘he followed God with all his heart.’ During the twenty-five years I was associated with him in the ministry I never knew him to fail of fasting two days in each week, and whether in the mansion of the opulent or in the frontier cabin, when he left, the family felt that an ambassador of Christ had been under their roof. And now, after his lips have long been dust, his name is a household word with us in the West. Men and women, the children of the pioneer settler, speak of what he said to them when they were children while at their father’s house.

“As a preacher, Mr. Phelps was a workman that needed not to be ashamed. Being a good scholar and a great student, he read books, and their contents

were his. In history, philosophy, and theology he was ever at home, and while he never made a display of his natural or acquired abilities, yet none could be in his presence and hear him without feeling they were in the presence of a master. His voice was clear and musical and was perfectly under his control. His imagination was fine, yet he never let it carry him beyond the fields of reason. He could say to that wonderful faculty 'thus far and no further.' As a logician he excelled. His preaching instructed, pleased, and carried you away. Some men, in order to put on their strength must have a multitude to hear them. Not so with Mr. Phelps. I have heard him on camp grounds preaching where thousands listened with delight, and in the frontier cabin to a dozen emigrants, and whether on his knees wrestling with the Angel of the Covenant or preaching Christ, I willingly consented to be his prisoner. Some men preach controversy and preach nothing else, and some seldom preach any thing but the practical duties of religion. He seemed at home every-where. The sermons he preached on the Evidences of Revealed Religion, the Divinity of Christ, the Resurrection, the Final Judgment, Baptism, the Relation of Children to the Church, Moses leading the Children of Israel out of Egypt, and the Martyrdom of St. Stephen, were not only great—*they were wonderful*. These and other topics upon which he preached are still remembered by thousands, and they express the regret that so good and so great a man has left so little in a tangible form for the benefit of those who are to come after him; but, like Russel Bigelow, William B. Christie, and John Strange, his 'witness

is in heaven and his record on high." In his personal appearance he was plain and neat, every-where the Christian gentleman and Methodist preacher. He was also a very fine singer. He was, in his day, in song what Chaplain M'Cabe is to-day.

"When he entered the traveling ministry his salary was one hundred dollars a year, and he seldom received that amount. On this he supported himself. And in justice to the memory of my friend and brother, I must say he would live on less and do more work with his hands and sell more Methodist books than any man I ever knew in the ministry of our Church. God honored him in placing him here early in the history of the Western country with such men as Peter Cartwright, Henry Summers, Samuel H. Thompson, Jesse Walker, John S. Barger, John Strange, John St. Clair, Hooper Crews, S. R. Biggs, Peter Akers, Michael S. Taylor, Peter Borein, B. H. Cartwright, Z. Hall, John T. Mitchell, E. R. Ames, and others whose names are in the book of life. Surely it may be said "there were giants in those days." These men under God laid the foundation upon which coming generations are to build until the end of time.

"I have seen Mr. Phelps traveling a feeble mission on the frontier—on a large circuit which required him to preach once and twice every day in the week and often three times on the Sabbath,—but I never heard him complain. He received every appointment at the hands of his brethren cheerfully and never doubted that they were from God. When he visited me as presiding elder at my quarterly conferences he would preach from four to six times during

his stay. And he would have appointments sent in advance where he would preach in log cabins or school-houses on his way to his next quarterly-meeting. Thus lived and labored this great and good man, and of him it could be truthfully said when he died 'a prince and a great man has fallen in Israel.'"

After reading the descriptions given of Elder Phelps by his co-laborers one feels somewhat as did Bishop Thomson after viewing the great Taj Mahal, "as if it would be a relief to weep." Many years ago Mr. Phelps preached a sermon on "The Servants of God dismissed and rewarded," in which he said, "Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever? These questions are answered by the mournful records of the Church, and by our own observation. We all live to die. Death is the common lot of man. Even the most distinguished are not exempt." The monument erected over his dust in the Princeton Cemetery, by order of the Rock River and Central Illinois Conferences tells the sad story of his death. Bishop Wiley* once said, "Bishop Janes can not die; he will live forever." So may we say of A. E. Phelps. He will shine in the same galaxy with Thomas M. Eddy, Alfred Cookman, and J. V. Watson as a star forever.

*At Central Illinois Conference.

to work and live." When he began his work the *Christian Advocate* was but three years old, and had only a handful of subscribers; now, it is one of a family of *Advocates* that count their subscribers by thousands. Then, our colleges were few in number, and struggling barely for an existence; now, they are numerous and influential. Then, the entire membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church in these United States and Canadas amounted to but 418,438, and 1,642 itinerant preachers. Now, in the Methodist Episcopal Church alone, there is a membership of 1,471,777, 199,831 probationers, and 11,269 traveling preachers. The growth in the West is marvelous. What then constituted the territory of the old Illinois Conference, then the border Conference, is now divided up into many powerful Conferences, and lies east of the center of American civilization.

Elder Phelps died early in the campaign. Since then Peter Cartwright has gone, and Barger and Van Cleve; John Sinclair, Geo. Rutledge, Milton Bour, G. G. Worthington, J. V. Watson, and John Chandler have gone too.

"Thus star by star declines,
Till all are passed away,
As morning high and higher shines

To pure and perfect day;
Nor sink those stars in empty night,—
They hide themselves in heaven's own light."

Peter Akers, Richard Hargrave, W. D. R. Trotter, O. A. Walker, S. R. Beggs, W. L. Deneen, S. P. Burr, S. H. Stocking, S. P. Keys, J. Morey, W. C. Cummings, J. Luccock, Z. Hall, and Henry Summers are now on the roll of honor, awaiting further orders. Bishop E. R. Ames, W. J. Rutlege, Hooper Crews, Chauncey Hobart, Richard Haney, and many younger co-laborers, are still shouting on the battle. In fifty years more not a man of the old veterans of the border Conference will be left to tell the story. Many younger men are waiting for the coming of the Golden Chariot. What a host of pioneer members—our fathers and mothers—have gone!

Cartwright, Sinclair, Barger, Hedstrom, Strange, Walker, Chandler, Phelps, hail! the remnant of the old army is marching to meet you.

"Then in thy presence, Heavenly King,
In loftier strains thy praise we'll sing,
When with the blood-bought hosts we meet
Triumphant there, in bliss complete,
And cast our crowns before thy feet,
In endless day."

Amen!

CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH.

CONCLUSION.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,—
Of all our love is this the end?
Is nothing left us of our friend
But treasured page or marble bust,
And leal life-memories of inviolate truth?”

W. MORLEY PUNSHON.

THE end of a delightful task is now reached, and this sketch must close. A singular fatality has attended the family of Elder Phelps. Emma, who was sick many months before her father's death, lingered for years in an agony of suffering, and then went to rest. G. H. Phelps studied law, and entered upon the duties of his profession with flattering prospects of success. He became an active member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Princeton, Ill., but his work was soon done, and he went to his reward. Mary was happily married, and removed to her new home in Ottawa, Ill., and in a few years was called to her home on high. J. W. Phelps of the children alone survives. He lived without the pale of the Church until he had grown to manhood, when, under the labors of our

lamented A. A. Matthews, he was brought into the fold. He was soon licensed to preach and received into the Rock River Conference, of which he is now an active member. Mrs. Charlotte Phelps resides with her son, in Plainfield, Ill. She has never ceased to mourn her great loss in the death of her husband. Mr. Phelps's father-in-law, Joseph Caterline, still lingers. He resides in Kewanee, Ill. He loved A. E. Phelps as he did his own children, and now delights to talk of his trials and triumphs. Thus this beloved family have wasted away one by one until the many have gone, and only a remnant remains.

"The good are better made by ill,
As odors crushed are sweeter still."

The patient reader has had glimpses of the life of a model man in perusing these pages. Christ was his model, the *only* perfect model. Such a life is an outgrowth of Christianity, and an argument in its behalf more eloquent than poets' pen or artists' brush can trace. The lessons to be learned from the devoted life of our lamented Phelps are impressive and inspiring. His dust now sleeps in the cemetery at Princeton, Illinois. The scene is beautiful. A suitable monument* marks the spot hal-

* Erected by Central Illinois, and Rock River Conferences.

lowed by his dust. The empty hull of a fallen acorn, cut on the marble that stands at the head of his grave, tells the mournful story. There let him rest until the bright resurrection morning.

“Faith, when weeping over tombs,
Sees Easter symbols in the clod,
Hills which go climbing up to God;
A fragrant wealth of heavenly blooms,
And far beyond the glory of the golden domes.”

A few years ago a rustic friend presented the writer with a chrysalis. He securely fastened it to his study shelf by a pin. It was an ugly helpless mass. After it had hung thus for two weeks, on one Monday it was found hanging to the broken shell. It gently moved its brilliant wings, and then flew away from flower to flower and in the bright sunshine. Thus shall our pious dead break from their graves and soar away to heaven and God; and from that grave in Princeton, where angels guard his dust, shall come forth in glorious array the form of ASAH ELIHU PHELPS.



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